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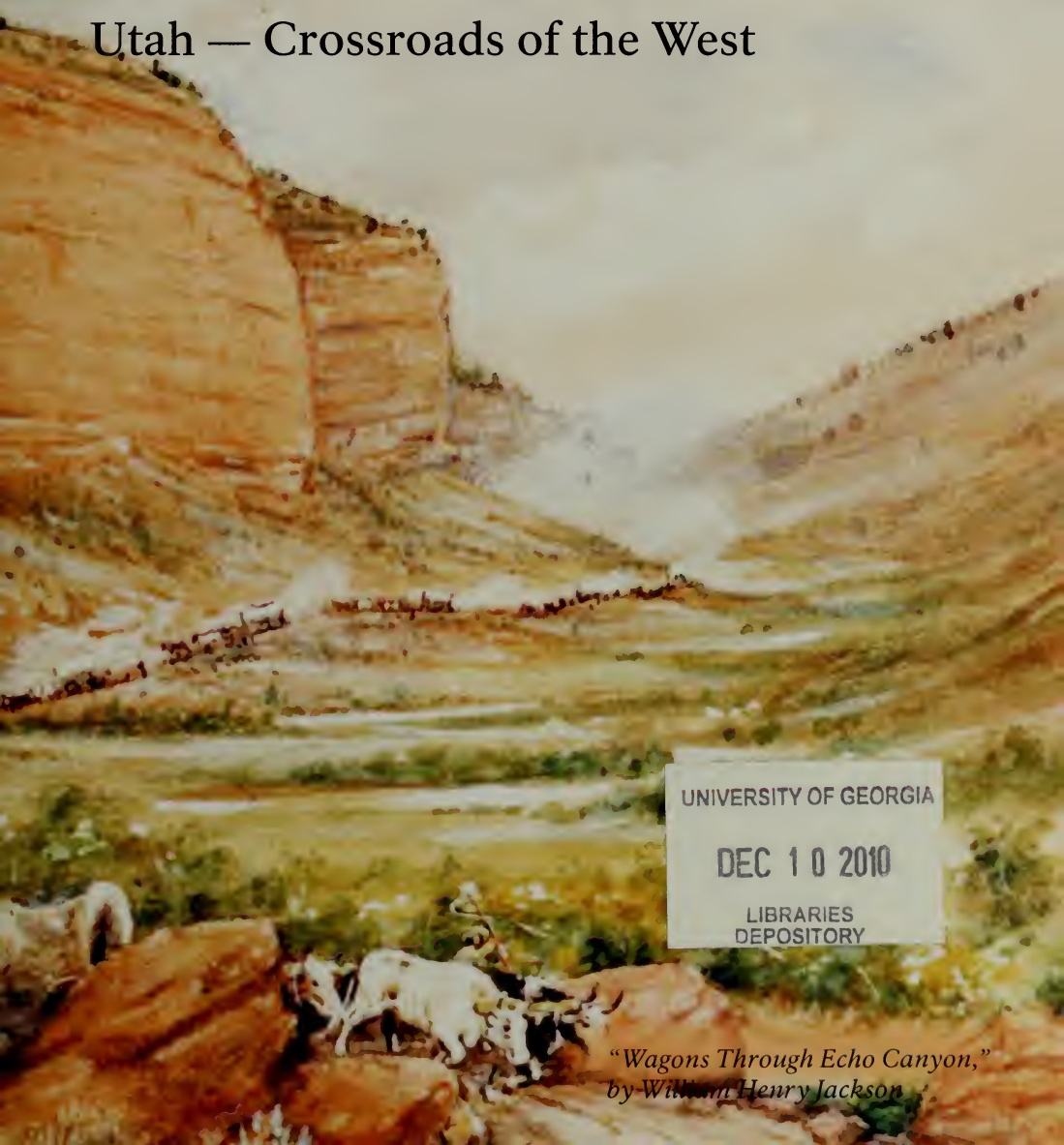
National Historic Trails

Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide

Utah — Crossroads of the West



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"Wagons Through Echo Canyon,"
by William Henry Jackson

Pony Express Bible photograph is courtesy of Joe Nardone, — Pony Express History Association.

Every Pony Express rider working for Russell, Majors, and Waddell, was issued a personal Bible to carry with them and obliged to pledge this oath: "I, [name of rider] *- do hereby swear before the great and living God that during my engagement and while I am an employee of Russell, Majors, and Waddell, I will under no circumstances use profane language, I will drink no intoxicating liquors; that I will not quarrel or fight with any other employee of the firm and that in every respect I will I conduct myself honestly, faithful to my duties, and so direct my acts, as to win the confidence of my employers, So help me God."*

NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

AUTO TOUR ROUTE INTERPRETIVE GUIDE

Utah — Crossroads of the West

Prepared by

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION • 1

A NOTE ON STATE BOUNDARIES • 2
THE BIG EMPTY • 3
SAGEBRUSH AND SALT FLATS • 4
FIRST WAGONS INTO UTAH • 7
'A NIGHER ROUTE': The Hastings Cutoff • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • 11
'THIS IS THE PLACS': The Mormon Pioneers • • • • • • • • • • • • • 18
A HALF-WAY HOUSE ON THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL • • • • • • • • • 28
THE UTAH WAR • 34
'THE FORLORNEST SPOT': The Pony Express Trail in Utah • • • 36
THE WARPATH • 43
CROSSROADS OF THE WEST • 47

SITES AND POINTS OF INTEREST • 49
AUTO TOUR SEGMENT A: Wyoming Border To Salt Lake City, Utah — (Hastings Cutoff Of The California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express Trails) • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • 49
OPTIONAL BACKCOUNTRY ROUTE: East Canyon/Little Emigration Canyon • 65
SALT LAKE CITY PIONEER TOUR • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • 77
AUTO TOUR SEGMENT B: Salt Lake City To West Wendover, NV • 90
OPTIONAL BACKCOUNTRY ROUTE: Skull Valley and Hastings Pass • 95
AUTO TOUR SEGMENT C: Salt Lake City To City Of Rocks NR, ID (Salt Lake Cutoff of the California Trail) • • • • • • • • • • 105
AUTO TOUR SEGMENT D: Pony Express Trail National Back Country Byway • 110

For More Information • 122
Credits • 122
Regional Map • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • **Inside the back cover**

INTRODUCTION

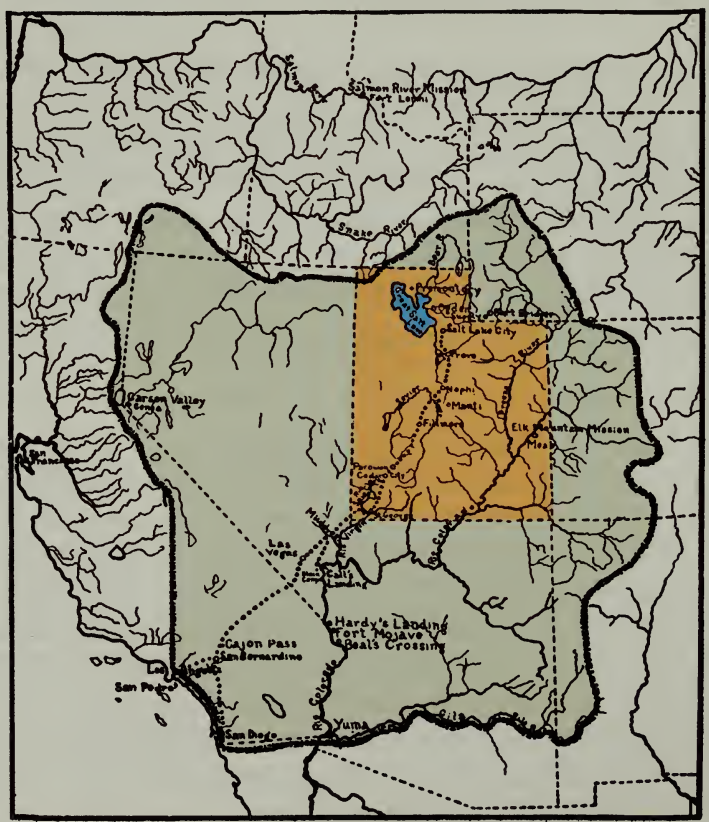
Many of the pioneer trails and other historic routes that are important in our nation's past have been designated by Congress as National Historic Trails. While most of the trail ruts still in existence are not open to motorized traffic, people can drive along modern highways that either overlie the original route or closely parallel it. Those modern roads are designated as Auto Tour Routes, and they are marked with highway signs and trail logos to help today's travelers follow the routes used by the pioneers who helped to open the American West.

This interpretive publication guides visitors along the Auto Tour Routes for the California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express National Historic Trails across Utah. Site-by-site driving directions are included, and an overview map is located inside the back cover. To make the tour more meaningful, this guide also provides a historical overview of the three trails, shares the thoughts and experiences of emigrants who followed these routes, and discusses how the westward expansion impacted the native peoples of what is now Utah.

Individual Auto Tour Route interpretive guides such as this one are in preparation for each state through which the trails pass. In addition, individual National Park Service brochures for the California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express National Historic Trails are available at many trail-related venues, and also can be requested from the National Trails System administrative office at 324 South State Street, Suite 200, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111. Each brochure includes a map of the entire trail and a general overview of trail history. Additional information about each trail also can be found on individual trail web sites. Links are listed on the "For More Information" page in this guide.

A NOTE ON STATE BOUNDARIES

National, territorial, and state boundaries across the West shifted repeatedly throughout the overland emigration era. Mexico ceded its holdings between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean to the United States in 1848, six months after the Mormons settled near the Great Salt Lake. In 1849, Mormon leaders proposed a State of Deseret that took in most of the ceded area, including southern California. Congress rejected that huge "provisional state" but in 1850 created Utah Territory, which included today's Utah, western Colorado, southwestern Wyoming, and most of Nevada. This area gradually was subdivided into more territories and states through the 1860s. The State of Utah, with its modern-day boundaries, was admitted as the 45th state in the Union in January 1896.



Map of Deseret. Base map is courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society, but has been modified by NPS to outline the proposed nation of Deseret.

To simplify geographical descriptions in the pages that follow, references to states and specific historical locations — for example, Fort Bridger, Wyoming — reflect modern state boundaries.

THE BIG EMPTY

West of the Wasatch Range a pale sky yawns, exposing rows of mountains like teeth in a fearsome mouth.

The Great Basin, that Big Empty between hither and yon, is a raw and merciless land. Many 19th century emigrants, after several months trudging from the Missouri River with ox and wagon, stopped at its hither edge to settle near the Great Salt Lake. Many others, gazing west into that alien expanse, wanted urgently to meet its yon side at the Sierra Nevada as quickly as possible. Very few stopped permanently, willingly, in the thirsty in-between.

Despite its forbidding qualities, or more likely because of them, the Great Basin was the setting for some of the most absorbing stories of the American West. Their plots would bloom and ripen along the emigrant trails of Utah, in the eastern Great Basin.

The Great Salt Lake Desert west of Salt Lake City, Utah.

SAGEBRUSH AND SALT FLATS

The Great Basin is a vast, high-elevation desert that takes in almost 200,000 square miles of southeastern Idaho, western Utah, nearly all of Nevada, and slices of California and Oregon. Like a shallow bowl, the Basin catches and holds water, allowing none to escape to the Pacific. Many thousands of years ago that bowl was full of lakes, some of immense size, but today its inward-flowing streams bleed into a few isolated remnants of those ancient lakes — or choke and die at river-graveyards called *sinks*. In places, groundwater bubbles up into springs and expansive marshes or collects in broad, shallow *playa* pools that evaporate and leave a bright crust of crystallized salts.

A bone-dry playa or salt flat makes a superb road, smooth, flat, and firm; but when the underlying clay is wet, a horse or ox can break through the white crust and mire to its knees, and a wagon might sink to its axles in the muck. Wet or dry, salt playas glare like snow in the midday sun, burning unprotected eyes and skin. Midsummer daytime temperatures on the Bonneville Salt Flats west of Salt Lake City can exceed 100 ° F, and heat waves there distort the light to create surreal illusions. Out in the salt desert, travelers on the Hastings Cutoff to

Pilot Peak and the Great Salt Desert with spring snowmelt.

California might see non-existent lakes, mountains floating on air, distant rocks resembling lost cattle, and approaching pack trains magnified into fantastic, writhing serpents.

But the Great Basin is not just a big, flat salt pan: it is a bowlful of mountains. Hundreds of mountain ranges rise in roughly parallel north-south rows, separated by broad valleys. From the air, these ranges look like enormous swells cresting in a sagebrush sea. From the height of a horse, they look like serious obstacles. Anyone crossing the Basin by ox and wagon had to find a way around the mountains. Only one natural pathway cuts through this washboard barrier: the Humboldt River Valley of Nevada.

Salt desert and sagebrush steppe. Sun-tempered mountains the color of steel. Heat and eye-scalding dust, turbid streams and briny waterholes... miles and miles with no water at all. The Great Basin is stark, yet it offers a living to those who know where and when to look for food, and who keep an open mind about what makes a good meal. On the Great Basin menu are grass seeds, pine nuts, berries, cattail roots and pollen; fish and waterfowl, jackrabbits, antelope, deer, ground squirrels and lizards (few buffalo here); and ant eggs, caterpillars, crunchy grasshoppers, leggy Mormon crickets, and well-seasoned brine fly larvae that wash up in windrows along some Great Basin lake shores. Pioneers scorned many of these wild foods, although there would be times on the road ahead when they might gratefully eat much worse. But the native peoples of the desert could ill afford to be so choosy.

The riverless region southwest of the Great Salt Lake, between the Oquirrh Range of Utah and the Schell Creek Range of eastern Nevada, is some of the harshest, most food-scarce country in the Great Basin. It also is the ancestral homeland of the Goshute Shoshone Indians. When they had the desert to themselves, the Goshutes — "dry earth people" — spent most of the year scattered across the landscape in small family groups. They ranged the country on foot, keeping no horses that would eat up the seed-grasses the people needed for their own survival. The Goshutes were too few and too dispersed to form a tribe, but families gathered from time to time to cooperate in hunts and harvests. They ate whatever the earth

provided, sheltered in simple brush huts and cliff-side alcoves, and carried few possessions. Isolated, desert-savvy, and resourceful, the Goshutes lived like shadows on the land, in trembling balance with nature. They had enough to survive but nothing to spare.

Although the Great Salt Lake Desert may have looked vacant, it was fully occupied, altogether and efficiently used. The arrival in the 1840s of new people and their livestock, competing for the same precious resources, would topple the delicate balance the Goshutes had maintained for many centuries.

Salt desert and sagebrush with scattered waterholes — some fresh, but most are salty — make up the natural habitat surrounding much of the Great Salt Lake .

FIRST WAGONS INTO UTAH

A handwritten letter was all the 69 pioneers had to guide them to California as they prepared to leave Independence, Missouri, in May 1841. The first covered wagon train to head West had no road to follow, no guide, no experience with long-distance overland travel or the native people they would meet along the way — and for good measure, they had no useful map. But before leaving home, young John Bidwell, a 21-year-old Pennsylvania schoolteacher, had studied some old maps belonging to a friend. Beyond the Continental Divide, the drawings showed a huge lake, and from it two great rivers snaked west to the Pacific Ocean. Simply find one of the rivers and follow it to California. What could be simpler? In fact, the map's owner (who was *not* going along) suggested that the emigrants carry tools so that they might build boats and ride the currents to the Land of Promise.

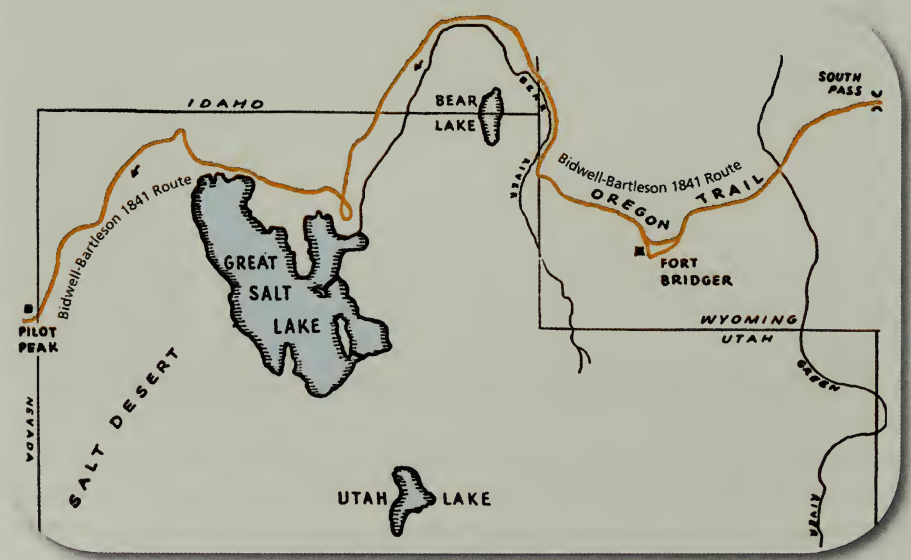
By stroke of luck, these ill-prepared pioneers soon joined up with mountain man Thomas "Broken Hand" Fitzpatrick, who guided their wagons over plains and mountains to Soda Springs, in today's Idaho. But that was the end of Fitzpatrick's trail: from there the emigrants were on their own. Before leaving them, the frontiersman persuaded about half of the wagon company to follow the old trappers' route along the Snake and Columbia Rivers to Oregon instead of venturing into unknown country between Soda Springs and California. Only a few mountain men, including the great Jedediah Smith and Peter Skene Ogden, had ever probed that region, and their opinions of it were grim. "A Country of Starvation," warned Smith; "truly a barren country," cautioned Ogden. Undaunted, on August 11, 1841, the other thirty-four pioneers of Fitzpatrick's party resolutely steered their wagons southwest along the Bear River toward the Great Salt Lake. They would find their own way to California.

This group, called the Bidwell-Bartleson Party, did send four riders north to the Fort Hall trading post to recruit a guide from among the fur trappers there. The returning outriders overtook the wagons 10 days later in what is today northern Utah, but they brought no guide — nothing but second-hand information gleaned from trappers who had only *heard* about the country ahead.

Don't go too far south before turning west to California, the trappers advised, for there lay an immense desert with no feed or water for the livestock. And don't turn off too far north, either, they warned, for there lay a maze of streams and canyons where the travelers would wander, lost and starving. But if the emigrants were to turn west toward California at just the right spot, neither too far south nor too far north, they eventually would strike Mary's River (later named the Humboldt River), which they could follow into the heart of the Great Basin.

John Bidwell portrait Courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.

The fact was no one knew but little about the country. No one had been through to California by that route so far as we could learn.
— John Bidwell, California emigration, 1841.



1841 Route taken by Bidwell - Bartleson between South Pass and Pilot Peak.

As the determined emigrants continued down the Bear River looking for the perfect place to split off toward Mary's River, they noticed that the stream was growing increasingly briny. Even the nearby grass was "shining with salt," so the suffering draft mules and oxen could neither feed nor drink. Adding to the torment, the August heat magnified the landscape and made distant shrubs look like well-watered groves of trees. In their confusion, the emigrants followed mirages across the mud flats west of today's Brigham City toward the Great Salt Lake.

> *Thus misled, we traveled all day without water, and at midnight found ourselves on a plain, level as a floor, incrusted with salt, and as white as snow . . . This plain became softer and softer until our poor, almost famished, animals could not pull our wagons. In fact, we were going direct to Salt Lake and did not know it.* — John Bidwell, California emigration, 1841.

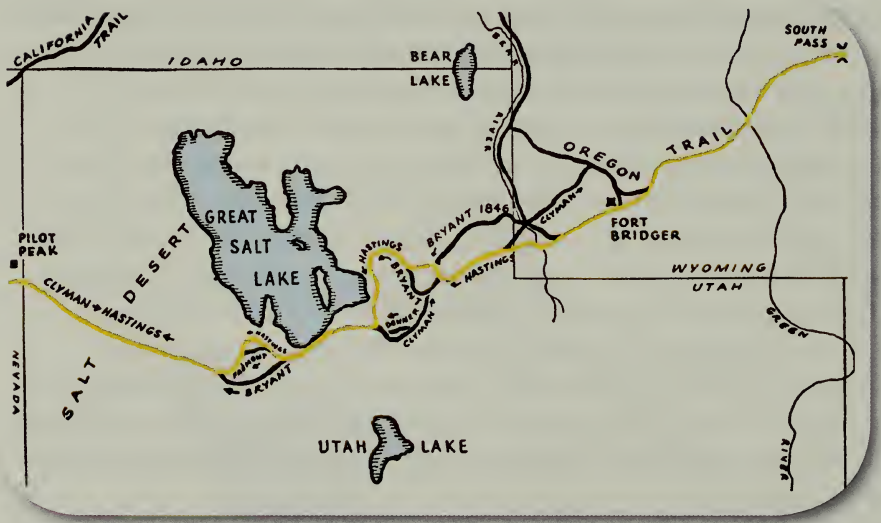
Disoriented and uncertain, they looped around, crossed their own track, struggled through sagebrush so dense that it overturned the lighter wagons, and blundered their way along the north end of the lake. At last finding a source of good water (later named Ten-mile Spring), the company sat in camp for over a week until their scouts returned with news that Mary's River was about five days' travel ahead. Onward the emigrants toiled. East of the present-day state border near Lucin, Utah, a month after leaving Soda Springs, the faltering oxen belonging to pioneer Ben Kelsey moaned to a halt. Kelsey unyoked his cattle, emptied the wagon, and loaded belongings, his 18-year-old wife, Nancy, and their toddler daughter onto horses. They would pack to California, driving their oxen before them. Within a few days, Kelsey's companions would abandon their wagons, too.

Now it was mid-September. The Bidwell-Bartleson Party, already out of provisions, faced a hungry two-month trek across the Great Basin and a perilous late-season crossing of the Sierra Nevada.

The Bidwell-Bartleson wagon route around the north end of the Great Salt Lake was abandoned until 1869, when Union Pacific laid tracks through that area for the transcontinental railroad. Today, state

highways and local roads between Snowville and Lucin approximate the Bidwell route.

But the oncoming emigration would find other — and not always better — ways to California.



1846 route of the Hastings Cutoff on the California Trail between South Pass and Pilot Peak.

'A NIGHER ROUTE': The Hastings Cutoff

This new cutoff from Fort Bridger to California could save hundreds of miles, Lansford W. Hastings promised westbound emigrants during the summer of 1846. The great Pathfinder himself, Captain John C. Fremont, only last year blazed a direct route between the Great Salt Lake and the Humboldt River. Hastings had just ridden that route east from California. If anyone cared to try it, he and his partner, James Hudspeth, would personally lead the way.

And a fine, level road it was, chimed Jim Bridger, a proprietor of a Wyoming trading post that was conveniently located to serve travelers on the new cutoff. Plenty of water and grass — well, except for a 40-mile dry stretch. With few wagons on the brand-new trail, dust wouldn't be bad, either.

But not everyone thought this cutoff was a good idea. The route, in fact, was not a road, not even a pack trail, and had never seen a wheel. The relief was more rugged, the desert more dangerous than reported, and it was doubtful that the "cutoff" was any shorter than the established wagon trail through Fort Hall, in today's Idaho. James Clyman, who had ridden the route from California with Hastings and Hudspeth, continued east on his own and warned emigrants along the way that Hastings' new shortcut was "verry little nearer" than the old road through Fort Hall—and likely impassable for wagons. He said so plainly to a California-bound friend he encountered at Fort Laramie, Wyoming: James Reed of the Donner-Reed Party.

Lansford Hastings portrait, Courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.

I told him to 'take the regular wagon track [by way of Fort Hall, Idaho] and never leave it — it is barely possible to get through if you follow it — and it may be impossible if you don't.' Reed replied, 'There is a nigher route, and it is of no use to take so much of a

roundabout course.' — James Clyman recounting conversation with James Reed at Fort Laramie, 1846.

Clyman had impressive frontier credentials. He had trapped the Green River country in the 1820s, ridden with Jedediah Smith and Thomas Fitzpatrick, helped rediscover South Pass, explored the Great Salt Lake in a rawhide bullboat, and crossed the continent several times — most recently by the very cutoff now in debate. But in the end, Reed and others thought an open letter from Hastings, sent east by courier to recruit emigrants along the trail, was more compelling than the advice of crusty old Clyman. Why, Hastings was an author, had written *The Emigrant's Guide to Oregon and California*, and he and Hudspeth were waiting at Fort Bridger to pilot them! Besides, the Donner-Reed Party was among the last groups on the trail that summer. The travel season was growing late and the fearsome Sierra Nevada still lay ahead. With Jim Bridger himself vouching for it, this new shortcut was surely too good to pass up.

When the emigrants reached Bridger's post on July 28, though, they learned that their guides had departed eight days earlier leading a group of mule-packers and 70 to 80 emigrant wagons. A note left by Hastings urged late arrivals to come on and catch up. It should be easy enough, following the tracks of slower-moving advance wagons that were doing the hard work of breaking trail.

James and Margret Reed: Courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.

As the 20 wagons of the Donner-Reed Party rolled out of the fort and onto the Hastings Cutoff on July 31, it did seem easy. They followed the trail of the lead wagons southwestward across the corner of Wyoming into Utah, over the bluffs east of today's I-80, and through scenic Echo Canyon. Near the junction of I-80 and I-84 at the modern community of Echo, the trace turned northwest, crossed the Weber River, and continued along the water course toward present-day Henefer. There the river entered Weber Canyon, a narrow defile that

squeezed the stream so tightly that it thrashed and screamed. Wedged into a sagebrush near the head of the canyon fluttered a second note from Hastings. Its message was a punch in the gut.

The lead wagons, misdirected by Hudspeth, had barely escaped catastrophe in dangerous Weber Canyon. Do not attempt passage by that route, the note warned. Wait here and send a rider ahead to overtake Hastings and fetch him back. He would guide them along a faster, safer route through the Wasatch Mountains.

Now there would be no wagon trail to follow. The men of the Donner-Reed Party would have to blaze their own track through the rugged wilderness. The date was August 6.

Four days later, James Reed returned to camp with more bad news. He had overtaken Hastings near the south shore of the Great Salt Lake. Reluctantly, Hastings had accompanied Reed only partway back to the Weber River encampment where the others waited; he could not abandon his lead wagons, which were about to enter the salt desert. So, from a mountaintop east of the Great Salt Lake Valley, Hastings had stood in his stirrups and pointed out to Reed a route through the jumble of Wasatch peaks. And then he rode way.

With a growing sense of urgency, the Donner-Reed Party turned from the Weber River and began grubbing trail southwestward through a maze of brush-and-boulder-choked gulches, each more grueling than the last. Today's Highway 65 over Big Mountain Pass and the Emigration Canyon Road into Salt Lake City approximate their route. Up and down mountainsides, crossing and re-crossing streams, whacking through willows growing thick as grass, chopping, shoveling, prying, pushing ... many days they gained only two or three miles of trail after hours of back-breaking work. Along the way, another emigrant family out of Fort Bridger overtook and joined them, bringing the Donner-Reed Party to a total of 23 wagons and 87 souls.

Finally the travelers dropped into Emigration Canyon, one of the worst of the Wasatch drainages, strangled with underbrush, wagons pitching over 18 deep creek crossings, passage growing tighter,

tighter, tighter until, at the very gate of the Salt Lake Valley, they found themselves at a dead end, blocked by heavy brush and a limestone abutment. Unable to summon the strength to punch through, the emigrants wheeled left and drove their wagons one by one directly up the steep slope of the ravine to an eminence that still bears the name *Donner Hill.*

The last wagon lurched out of Emigration Canyon into the dry air of the Great Basin on August 22. Altogether, the delay at the Weber River plus the 36-mile crawl through the mountains to the Salt Lake Valley — a distance that should typically take three to four days by ox and wagon — had cost the Donner-Reed Party 17 precious days.

> *We at last came within one mile of Salt Lake Valley, when we were compelled to pass over a hill so steep that from ten to twelve yoke of oxen were necessary to draw each wagon to the summit. From this height we beheld the Great Salt Lake, and the extensive plains by which it is surrounded. It gave us great courage; for we thought we were going to have good roads through a fertile country ....*
> — Adult reminiscence of John Breen, 14-year-old member of the Donner-Reed Party.

Pilot Peak, in the early Spring, from the west side of Hastings Pass in the Cedar Mountains and the Great Salt Desert in the foreground.

Continuing west across the Salt Lake Valley, the emigrants merged two days later with the tracks of Hastings's lead wagons. But the relief they had felt since cresting Donner Hill soon was shattered at a waterhole later named, ironically, Hope Wells (at today's Iosepa in Skull Valley). There on August 28, the Donner-Reed Party discovered a third and final message from Lansford W. Hastings, note-writer extraordinaire.

The paper lay in scattered scraps, picked apart, perhaps, by ravens. Stunned, the emigrants wordlessly bent to collect and piece together the message: *2 days — 2 nights — hard driving — cross — desert — reach water.*

What! This meant that the dry crossing must be much longer than 40 miles — maybe twice that span! (Later emigrants measured the distance at over 80 miles.) There was nothing to do but move on. The group paused at one last brackish waterhole, Redlum Spring, clambered over Hastings Pass through the Cedar Mountains, and followed the tracks of the lead wagons over the rocky ribs of the Grayback Hills. Now they entered the salt desert.

Many pioneers along the California Trail commented that the Great Salt Lake Desert was the most desolate place they had ever seen. Photograph is courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.

& we had to go through a long drive of 40 miles With out water or grass Hastings said it was 40 but I think it was 80 miles We traveld a day and night & a nother day....we laid down on the ground we spred one shawl down we laid doun on it and spred another over us and then put the [pet] dogs on top it was the couldes night you most ever saw the wind blew and if it haden bin for the dogs we would have Frosen — Virginia Reed, 13-year-old member of Donner-Reed Party, letter dated May 16, 1847.

Out on the glaring salt flats, the sun broiled people and livestock from above and radiant heat roasted them from below. At night, icy winds rattled the wagon covers and slapped through thin clothing. Thirsty cattle collapsed and never rose, and the slower wagons dropped behind. In the extreme heat, mirages of grassy lakeshores taunted the travelers. On the third day in the salt desert, the desperate emigrants unyoked their suffering oxen to drive them ahead to the next known water at the base of Pilot Peak. Some animals, mad with thirst, stampeded into the desert. On the sixth day of the dry crossing, the last of the scattered emigrants reeled into camp to join the others at the Pilot Peak waterhole, now called Donner Springs.

In the 1940s, historians photographed the remains of emigrant wagons that often became mired in the soft sands and soils of the Great Salt Lake Desert.
Photograph is courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.

There the group spent a week recovering from the frightful ordeal and searching for missing cattle. Two Goshute men approached camp and with hand-motions made known that they had found some lost livestock; but the emigrants feared it was a trick and hurried the Indians away. Many of the missing animals never were found. Altogether the brutal crossing had cost 36 oxen, along with two wagons ruined by the drying effects of salt and sun and two more abandoned for lack of draft animals to pull them.

> *In fact, it was impossible to find cattle on those plains, as the mirage, when the sun shone, would make every object the size of a man's hat look as large as an ox, at the distance of a mile or more; so one could ramble all day from one of these delusions to another, till he became almost heart-broken from disappointment, and famished from thirst.* — Adult reminiscence of John Breen, 14-year-old member of the Donner-Reed Party.

To conserve the strength of their remaining oxen, the emigrants were forced to leave many cherished possessions behind in the desert. When instructed by her parents to forsake her belongings, eight-year-old Patty Reed secretly tucked a tiny wooden doll, a lock of her beloved grandmother's hair, and several other small mementos into her clothing. Dolly, especially, would comfort her in the months to come.

The morning of September 10, 1846, with an overnight dusting of snow frosting nearby Pilot Peak, the Donner-Reed Party broke camp and rolled toward Nevada.

> *For riveting first-person accounts of Hastings's lead companies down the Weber River and across the Great Salt Lake Desert, see "From St. Louis to Sutter's Fort, 1846" by Heinrich Lienhard and "What I Saw in California" by Edwin Bryant.*

'THIS IS THE PLACE': The Mormon Pioneers

Lurid accounts of certain events that had occurred in the Sierra Nevada over the past winter were already circulating among the California newspapers as the first Mormon wagons followed the Donner-Reed ruts into Echo Canyon the summer of 1847.

It was mid-July and the Latter-day Saints' destination, the Great Salt Lake Valley, lay only 40 miles ahead. Although this party of about 145 vanguard pioneers (including three women and two children) was in no danger of being trapped by mountain blizzards, other worries dogged them. The company's head and heart, Brigham Young, lay wracked with pain and fever in a sick-wagon that lagged miles behind the two forward wagon groups. More critically, the settlers were arriving in the valley very late in the planting season without enough provisions to see them through the approaching winter. Finally, at least 1,500 more pioneers, mostly families, even now were on their way from Winter Quarters (Omaha). They, too, would need food and shelter to survive the first winter in their new home.

Echo Canyon near Echo, Utah.

And survive there they would, come what may, for they were done with fleeing. The Latter-day Saints first had been violently expelled from Missouri in 1838. Their beloved founder and prophet Joseph Smith was murdered by a mob in 1844, and two years later anti-Mormon vigilantes drove his followers out of Nauvoo, Illinois, their settlement on the Mississippi River — drove them, homeless, onto the prairie.

Never again. The Great Basin belonged to Mexico, but the land was not settled. Remote and barren, the Basin had no known resources of particular value; nobody would come soon to wrest it from the Mormons — and when they did come, the Latter-day Saints would be ready. The Basin would be their final and permanent refuge, the Rocky Mountains their line in the sand.

Now their destination lay just ahead, and the red rock gateway into the Wasatch Mountains was like nothing they had experienced along the trail so far. William Clayton, a chronicler for the company, thought it *"seemed strange that a road could ever have been made"* through the narrow confines of Echo Canyon. Echo Creek burrowed between steep banks that forced crossing wagons to plunge sharply

"Wagons Through Echo Canyon." *Painting by William Henry Jackson (NPS)*

down to the water and groan, double-teamed, up the opposite side, and the canyon floor was littered with boulders and brush. Yet the place had its charms: peculiar rock formations practically begging to be given fun names like Castle Rock, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, and Noah's Ark; shady bowers of wildflowers and sweet berries; and canyon narrows where a single shout could rebound 21 times (and where, one pioneer observed, a few men might hold off an army). Travelers through the years would praise the beauty of Echo Canyon, a delightful interlude on the long road west.

There is a very singular echo in this ravine the rattling of wagons resembles carpenters hammering at boards inside the highest rocks. The report of a rifle resembles a sharp crack of thunder and echoes from rock to rock for some time. The lowing of Cattle and braying of mules seems to be answered beyond the mountains. — William Clayton, 1847 Mormon advance party.

"First View Of The Great Salt Lake Valley" from the top of Big Mountain east of present-day Salt Lake City. *Painting by William Henry Jackson (NPS)*

[It is] beyond description for wilderness and beauty; we are indeed among the everlasting hills. — Jean Rio Griffiths Baker, 1851 Mormon emigration.

In front the eye runs down the long bright red line of Echo Kanyon, and rests with astonishment upon its novel and curious features, the sublimity of its broken and jagged peaks, divided by dark abysses, and based upon huge piles of disjointed and scattered rock. — Sir Richard Burton in *The City of the Saints*, an account of his 1860 stagecoach trip west.

Entering the head of Main Canyon near today's town of Henefer, the Mormon company's scouts found disappointingly little trace of the passage of the 23 Donner-Reed wagons just a year earlier. With axes, shovels, and pry-bars, a work crew set to clearing the trail anew. Despite the improvements, the oncoming wagons had to move cautiously, often tilted with two wheels in the streambed and two rolling through boot-piercing willow stubble on the creek bank. After Main Canyon came more of the same in Broad Hollow, Dixie Hollow, and what William Clayton named "the worst piece of road on the whole journey," East Canyon. Even in later years, with further improvements, the wagon track through these drainages was horrific.

The canyon road from Big Mountain west to the Salt Lake Valley is still used by modern-day travelers.

The road grew worse — it was bad in every way—it was sidling, muddy, rocky, and full of sharp pitches — and then, too, we had to cross, I don't know how many times, a brawling stream, which seemed to be out of temper with us and everything else. — Cornelia Woodstock Ferris, wife of federal appointee to Utah Territory, 1852.

The worst road that wheels ever rolled over. — Jotham Newton, 1853 California emigration.

Next the trail crew and wagons labored up Little Emigration Canyon to the summit of Big Mountain, where travelers caught their first glorious view into the Great Basin. Then and thereafter, it was a breath-taking sight.

The spirit of light rested upon me and moved over the valley, and I felt that there the Saints would find protection and safety.
— Brigham Young, recalling his experience of July 23, 1847.

View looking up Emigration Canyon from near the top of Donner Hill.

It was the grandest view that ever mortal beheld. The air was clear and perfect for a good view — the Great Salt Lake glittering under the suns rays, range after range of mountains in every direction, the great desert to the west .... A more sublime view was seldom seen from a mountain top. — Abner Blackburn, 1847 Mormon emigration.

All the world was glorified with the setting sun, and the most stupendous panorama of mountain peaks yet encountered burst on our sight .... Even the Overland stage-driver stopped his horses and gazed! — Mark Twain in *Roughing It,* an account of his 1861 stagecoach trip west.

Perhaps the view stoked travelers' courage for what came next: a nerve-wracking jump off the summit, straight down the mountainside. Many emigrants locked their wagon wheels with chains and skidded down the slope or lowered their wagons with ropes. The scars scraped into the earth by their passage are visible still from Highway 65, which switchbacks across the old ruts.

I started down with the horse & it was as steep as the roof of a house for a half a mile .... — Pardon Dexter Tiffany, letter to wife, 1849 California gold rush.

We came to a brow, called by a wag 'the jumping-off place,' where parachutes might be brought into requisition, the drop being so quick and so long that it appeared an undertaking of hopeless impossibility to get down in the ordinary way. — William Kelly in *An Excursion to California,* an account of his 1849 travels to California.

Now the wagons rolled down Mountain Dell and double-teamed up Little Mountain, where emigrants caught a second glimpse of the valley. Next came another steep descent to narrow, twisting Emigration Canyon, the last and, some said, worst of the Wasatch drainages. Time and again, the wagons pitched 15 to 20 feet down the stream bank to deep-running Emigration Creek and careened, with oxen double-teamed and groaning, up the opposite bank. Later travelers would find the road just as difficult.

You enter a Kanyon in many places so narrow & with such short turns in it that the middle one of three wagons travelling close together could not see the one behind. Beside this you have to cross the creek 19 times in 5 miles every one so cut by the wagons as to [be] exceedingly dangerous & some places nearly swimming a horse in mud and water. — Pardon Dexter Tiffany, letter to wife, 1849 California gold rush.

We traveled six hours down a narrow ravine which leads to the valley of the Salt Lake, over the most miserable road ever traveled by civilized man. — James Abbey, 1850 California emigration.

Of all the splendid scenery and awful roads that have ever been since creation, I think this day's journey has beaten them all....The road was completely covered with stones as large as bushel boxes, stumps of trees with here and there mud holes in which our poor oxen sunk to the knees ... One of my own teams was forced down a [creek bank] with such rapidity that one of the oxen fell into the stream and was drowned before it could be extricated. — Jean Rio Griffiths Baker, 1851 Mormon emigration

The 1847 company's forward scouts at length reached the place where the Donner-Reed Party, in exhausted frustration, had pulled up out of Emigration Canyon. The two men, Orson Pratt and Erastus Snow, climbed Donner Hill and gazed into the Great Basin and the broad valley at their feet. It was an emotional moment.

This Is the Place Heritage Park, located below Donner Hill, commemorates the arrival of the Mormon Pioneers in July 1847.
Photo is courtesy of Cory Maylett.

After issuing from the mountains among which we had been shut up for many days, and beholding in a moment such an extensive scenery open before us, we could not refrain from a shout of joy which almost involuntarily escaped from our lips the moment this grand and lovely scenery was within our view. — Orson Pratt, July 21, 1847, Mormon scouting party.

The company's trail crew arrived the next day and in four hours cut through the brush and dug a road around the limestone abutment that had stymied the Donner-Reed Party at the foot of Donner Hill. One by one, the weary workers stepped out of the canyon and onto the eastern slope of the Great Basin. The Wasatch, last and most difficult of the Rocky Mountain ranges, stood finally at their backs. Below the mouth of Emigration Canyon, the Valley of the Great Salt Lake rippled with a soft green blanket of tall grass, well-watered by mountain streams.

I could not help shouting 'hurra, hurra, hurra, there's my home at last.' — Thomas Bullock, July 22, 1847, Mormon emigration.

At their passage through the same limestone portal later that day, many among the pioneers shared Bullock's joy. Others were less enthusiastic. Heavily pregnant Harriet Young, Brigham Young's sister-in-law, looked her husband in the eye. "*We have traveled fifteen hundred miles to get here,*" she told Lorenzo Young with steel in her voice, "*and I would willingly travel a thousand miles farther to get where it looked as though a white man could live.*"

Salt Lake City, circa 1867. *Photograph is courtesy of the Library of Congress.*

William Clayton climbed Donner Hill for a better view and demurely proclaimed himself *"happily disappointed"* in his new home. Clayton was troubled by the lack of timber for construction in the mostly treeless valley. With what would they build their homes? He also observed, *"The ground seems literally alive with the very large black crickets crawling round, up grass and bushes. They look loathsome ...."*

Brigham Young, driven in a carriage to the valley overlook two days later, famously harbored no doubts. His companion later recalled Young's words as he gazed toward the valley encampment where the earlier Saints already had planted several acres with potatoes and

View of Salt Lake City from the south, circa 1891. *Photograph is courtesy of the Library of Congress.*

turnips, dammed a creek, and turned water into their ditches. *"It is enough,"* said Brigham Young. *"This is the right place. Drive on."* July 24, the date of Young's entry into the Salt Lake Valley, has been a day of public celebration in Utah every year since 1849. Today the anniversary, called Pioneer Day, is a state holiday.

In little over six months from the Mormons' arrival in the Salt Lake Valley, the Great Basin and California would belong to the United States and gold would be discovered at John Sutter's mill. The Latter-day Saints' mountain sanctuary was about to become a busy crossroads on the trail to California.

At this place [the mouth of Emigration Canyon] the pilgrim emigrants ... give vent to the emotions long pent up within their bosoms by sobs and tears, laughter and congratulations, psalms and

hysterics. It is indeed no wonder that the children dance, that strong men cheer and shout, and that nervous women, broken with fatigue and hope deferred, scream and faint .... — Sir Richard Burton in *The City of the Saints*, an account of his 1860 stagecoach trip west.

Oh, have we come all the way for this? — Ruth May, age 13, 1867 Mormon emigration.

A HALF-WAY HOUSE ON THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL

Roughly 10,000 treasure-hunters on their way to California the summer of 1849 followed the combined Donner-Reed and Mormon Trail into the Great Salt Lake City, which by then was a town of several thousand residents. Another 15,000 gold-seekers poured into the Mormon city of refuge the next year. Some were ill, needy, and desperate. Some were difficult, demanding, and profane. Many were polite, curious, and amazed at what the Mormons had accomplished. And nearly all of them drove into town with jaded, footsore livestock, heavy wagons over-packed with dry goods and equipment, pockets full of spending money, and a powerful incentive to trade.

Upon his arrival in the Great Salt Lake Valley, Brigham Young had vowed that the Latter-day Saints would reject the outside world that had rejected them, and would have no trade or commerce with it. But the ragged realities of life in the provisional state of Deseret (a word from Mormon scripture translated as "honeybee" and signifying industry) were sobering. Many goods in the new settlement were prohibitively expensive because everything the Mormon settlers could not yet produce for themselves — quality farm implements, industrial equipment, certain household items, good milled cloth — had to be freighted overland. More critically, for two consecutive years, drought, frost, grasshoppers, and crawling hordes of armored katydids the size of mice, popularly called Mormon crickets, had taken the bulk of the crops. Mormon settlers survived the winter of 1848-49 on boiled rawhide, gritty determination, and faith.

So Brigham Young's prohibition on trade quickly went out the window. God might be in their eyes and in their hearts but that did not make the Latter-day Saints blind and senseless to the gold-road gravy train that chugged into Deseret the summer of 1849. There was dealing to be done. The treasure-hunters and the Mormon pioneers needed one another, and so the Great Salt Lake City became the "Half-way House" on the trail to California.

Salt Lake City, especially as it grew and matured through the 1850s and '60s, was a sight for travelers' sore eyes. The carefully planned community was an orderly green grid of 10-acre blocks trimmed by wide streets, with deep residential lots and lush orchards and gardens, tidy adobe houses set back from the streets, and curbside ditches that brought running water to every home. At the north end of Main Street was a parcel of land set aside for church purposes, where the populace and curious visitors gathered beneath a shady bowery for Sunday worship. There on Temple Square, the Latter-day Saints gradually raised a dazzling granite temple, completed in 1893, with soaring spires that lift the eyes to heaven. Nearby, the Mormon Tabernacle — a turtle-backed architectural wonder — stood completed in 1867.

Great indeed was our relief at beholding the settlement of the persecuted Mormons. Even corn fields and sheaves of wheat never possessed such beauty in my eyes before .... — Adonijah Strong Welch, 1849 California gold rush.

We camped for several days in the outskirts of the city, and enjoyed to our heart's content the luscious fruit and fresh vegetables that we were able to buy or trade from the Mormon women. — Lavinia Porter, 1860 California emigration.

It was with feelings of joy that I beheld streets beautifully ornamented with shade trees and silver brooks by each sidewalk. Almost every garden is an orchard loaded with apples, peaches, plums &c. — Dr. Charles L. Anderson, 1862 California emigration.

It was quite a treat for us way worn emigrants coming off of the plains of sage and sand. to find in a few hours travel everything changed to life and bustle, with all the comforts and luxuries of life. — John N. Rush, 1864 California emigration.

In this orderly, civilized outpost, visitors could get fresh produce when there was a surplus; well-rested livestock, at a profitable mark-up; and a refreshing soak at the warm-spring bathhouse north of town. They could find a frontier doctor to treat their illnesses and

injuries, ask a Mormon judge to lance festering wagon-party disputes, hear some muscular preaching at the bowery on Temple Square, and get a good long gander at the venerable Lion of the Lord himself, Brigham Young, who typically led the open-air Sunday meetings. A lucky man might even enjoy an evening dance or two with a lovely Mormon belle under the watchful eyes of her guardians.

All comers were shocked, though, by the high cost of conducting business with the Mormons, and many, in astonished disbelief, recorded lists of prices in their trail journals. (Emigrant John Hawkins Clark remarked in 1852 that visiting Salt Lake City was *"something like taking in the Irishman's show: it cost nothing to get in, but a great deal to get out."*)

Most travelers stayed in the Great Salt Lake City for about a week, although some — "winter Mormons" — stayed through till the following spring. Many visitors left town with warm regard for their hosts despite the cost of merchandise, but not all opinions were charitable. Emigrant women, trembling at tales of trailside kidnappings by Mormon desperados, fearful they would be captured and forced into scandalous polygamous marriage, were on edge until they left Mormon territory. A number of travelers through Salt Lake City complained of unfair legal fines and property confiscations levied exclusively against non-Mormons. Where some visitors saw industry, order, intellect and thrift, others saw depravity, filth, ignorance and theft. Where some discovered the Mormons to be uncommonly sharp traders, others found them to be larcenous scoundrels. A few, impressed by the kindliness shown them by Latter-day Saints, converted to that faith and lived out their lives in the Salt Lake Valley. Others, with different experiences, could not wait to conclude their business and get out.

[The Mormons] were neat and well clad, their children tidy, the rosy glow of health and robustness mantling on the cheeks of all, while the softer tints of female loveliness prevailed .... [I was] perfectly enraptured with the Mormon ladies, and Mormon hospitality. — William Kelly in *An Excursion to California,* an account of his 1849 travels to California.

I would not live here if the whole city belonged to me among such a class of community. I haven't seen a handsomely dressed lady since I have been here. — Mary Ringo, 1864 California emigration.

I am living among the mormons about as hospitable a set of people as I have been among since I left home. — Andrew McFarlane, 1850 California gold rush.

A meaner set lives not on this earth than those very people calling themselves Latter day saints. — Lucena Parsons, overwintering in Salt Lake City 1859.

And there were several ways to leave town. One way was to go south along today's I-15 corridor past Cedar City and then follow the Old Spanish Trail west to Los Angeles. But that route, known as the Mormon Corridor or the Southern Route to California, was indirect and not suited for travelers in a hurry to reach the central and northern California gold fields. Another way was to follow the Hastings Cutoff across the Great Salt Lake Desert, but that route grew no easier with the passing years. It was just as salty, hot, mucky, dangerous, unbearable, and weird in 1850 as it had been in 1846. In fact, difficulties on the Hastings Cutoff led directly to the blazing of a new cutoff in time for the California gold rush.

Frontiersman Samuel J. Hensley was heading to California on the Hastings Cutoff with 10 men and a string of pack mules in July 1848 when the animals mired in the salt flats west of the Great Salt Lake. To save the mules, the men cut free their packs and returned to the Salt Lake Valley. Hensley's party then went north, along roughly the present-day alignments of I-15 and I-84 to today's Snowville, and continued northwest to join the California Trail at the City of Rocks in Idaho. Farther west on the Humboldt River, Hensley described his new cutoff to an eastbound wagon train of Mormon Battalion veterans who were on their way home from service in the Mexican-American War. The Mormon train followed Hensley's track back to Salt Lake City, thereby opening the trail to wagons. Within two years, the new road carried most of the California traffic out of Salt Lake, and the Hastings Cutoff across the salt flats was largely abandoned.

That's not to say that Hensley's Salt Lake Cutoff was a joyride. Englishman William Kelly, who published an account of his travels in *An Excursion to California,* left vivid descriptions of his experience along the route in 1849.

North of Salt Lake City:

As the wind came off the lake it carried with it a mineral stench arising from the stagnant water close along the brink, which was offensive to the utmost degree ....

The crickets are a serious nuisance, for the ground is alive with them; and they are not only destructive where they have their way, but the effluvia they emit is about as disgusting a sample of scent as any to be met with.

Later, Kelly added that even his livestock stared in alarm at the twitching mass of insects.

North of Ogden:

The sun, so early as ten o'clock, was so fearfully hot that I could not bear my hand upon the rifle that was slung from the horn of the saddle; and soon after it became so intense that two men got suddenly ill, and had to be placed in the wagons ....

At the Bear River crossing:

There was here a genus of gigantic fly, which attacked the horses with a degree of ferocity that I did not conceive could belong to the insect race. It darted at them with a humming whizz, perforating the skin...in some places letting out a perfect jet of blood.

West of the Bear River:

I did not before see so appalling a picture of awful desolation and utter solitude as that presented by the barren waste intervening betwixt the hills on which we were, and the mountains to the west. It had a scorched and withered aspect, that repulsed the eye and sickened the spirit.

As the Mormon settlements spread northward from Salt Lake City, parts of the Salt Lake Cutoff corridor became hemmed with farms where travelers could purchase, at a hefty price, fresh produce and butter. Along with that agricultural and commercial development grew increasing tensions between white pioneers and the Shoshone Indians, whose ancestral lands these were. On occasion, those intercultural conflicts broke out into bloodshed among the Mormon settlements and along the Oregon and California Trails through today's Idaho and northeastern Nevada.

In Utah Territory, another kind of conflict briefly captured the nation's attention.

Shoshone Indian Village, circa 1890. *Photograph is courtesy of The Library of Congress.*

THE UTAH WAR

Wagon traffic on the California Trail swelled in 1857 but dropped sharply in '58. Fear of fighting between the Mormons and the U.S. Army during a tense standoff called the "Utah War" usually takes the blame.

Both emigrants and Mormon settlers had good reason to be afraid. As federal troops marched unannounced toward Salt Lake City in May 1857 to install a non-Mormon territorial governor, informants quickly brought the news to acting governor Brigham Young. After several months of monitoring and pondering this federal show of force, Young declared martial law. Armed men had descended before on the Latter-day Saints in Missouri and Illinois, and Young suspected that another invasion was at hand. The Mormon leader mustered his militia to harass the oncoming army and fortify the emigrant wagon road through the Wasatch Mountains. Remnants of those fortifications are still visible in Echo Canyon and elsewhere along the trail into Salt Lake City. Fiery speeches and furious defense preparations stirred traumatic memories, fed local hysteria, and prompted some bellicose Mormons to destroy a passing wagon train at Mountain Meadows on the Southern Route near Cedar City, Utah. Leaking news of the massacre, along with on-going press-chatter about the Latter-day Saints' then-practice of "plural marriage" and complaints of injustice in Utah Territorial courts, in turn fanned outrage against the Mormons.

Curious Indian spectators from miles around gathered at vantage points in the Wasatch Mountains to watch the coming good fight among the white men. But they were disappointed, for the sputtering face-off between Utah Territory and the federal government never flared into civil war. The U.S. Army halted and huddled for the winter of 1857-58 near the site of old Fort Bridger as cooler heads calmed the confrontation. Brigham Young, defiant and unbowed, accepted a presidential pardon and cooperated in the peaceful installation of the new territorial governor.

But now the "war" turned cold. The U.S. Army marched cautiously through the broad, empty streets of Salt Lake City (which residents

had evacuated) and established Camp Floyd about 45 miles southwest of town. The soldiers were there mainly to protect the overland trails but also to keep an eye on the Mormons, who naturally resented the troops' presence. *"They hate us, and we hate them,"* an officer told Sir Richard Burton during the Englishman's 1860 visit to Utah. Chilled relations between Latter-day Saints and outsiders, including passing emigrants, persisted for years. The bitterness toward Mormons that is expressed in the journals of many California-bound travelers through Salt Lake City during the late 1850s and early '60s follows from these events.

Camp Douglas circa 1861-1870.
Photograph is courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Contained antagonism between Utah Territory and the federal government continued to chafe through the Civil War years. Camp Floyd, renamed Camp Crittenden, was disbanded in 1861 and its garrison sent east to battle the Confederates — but now the Mormons found themselves suspected of plotting to secede and blamed for inciting Indian attacks along the emigrant trails. To maintain control in Utah Territory and to protect the overland trails and telegraph from Indian attack, in 1862 the U.S. Army established Camp Douglas (later, Fort Douglas) on a bluff east of Salt Lake City. The camp commander, Col. Patrick Edward Connor, trained his artillery west toward the family homes and cheerful gardens of Salt Lake City. Although some visiting emigrants approved of Connor's threatening posture toward the Latter-day Saints, the U.S. Army would never find cause to fire on the city.

For an account of the massacre of Shoshones on the Bear River in Idaho by soldiers from Camp Douglas, see the Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide Along the Snake River Plain Through Idaho.

'THE FORLORNEST SPOT': The Pony Express Trail In Utah

An indirect outcome of the Utah War was the establishment of the Pony Express.

Mormon militiamen, attempting to delay the approaching U.S. Army, raided government cattle herds that were meant to feed the troops and attacked army supply trains carrying provisions for the soldiers. Some of the cattle and supply wagons destroyed or "liberated" by the Mormon militia belonged to the firm of Russell, Majors & Waddell, which was under contract with the War Department to haul military freight to Utah.

The firm lost to the Mormons 52 freight wagons, 300,000 pounds of provisions, 300 head of oxen, and 700 head of beef cattle, altogether wiping out more than two years' profits. These losses deepened the financial hole in which Russell, Majors & Waddell already stood as the result of several failed business ventures. In hope of winning a profitable government mail contract that would ward off bankruptcy, the firm's partners organized a horse-and-rider relay to carry mail year-round between St. Joseph, Missouri, and San Francisco, California, in 10 days' time. The Pony Express launched on April 3, 1860.

The Pony Express route followed the combined Oregon and California Trail from St. Joseph to Fort Bridger and continued southwest on the old Donner and Mormon Trail through the Wasatch Mountains. From Salt Lake City, the Pony turned south for almost 30 miles and then struck west along an existing stage and mail trail across the Great Basin to California. That route through the Basin was called the Central Overland Trail because it lay between the main California Trail through northern Nevada and the southern Butterfield stage route, also called the Oxbow Trail, across Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Unlike the northern trail, the Central Overland was (barely) passable on horseback in winter; and unlike the Butterfield stage route, it was not controlled by Southern interests as the Civil War loomed.

After spring rains, the Utah desert quickly greens up with a kaleidoscope of colors.

Captain James H. Simpson, of the U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers, was instrumental in developing the Central Overland Trail in 1858-59. Simpson surveyed a strategic military supply route — one not controlled by Brigham Young — directly between Camp Floyd and Genoa, Nevada, and improved it for wagon use. He then published notices in the Salt Lake newspapers announcing that his route was "from 25 to 50 per cent better" than the old California Trail along the Humboldt River. It had (he claimed) more wood and grass, could be used later in the fall and earlier in the spring, and because it went directly over several Great Basin mountain passes, the Central Overland route would be about 300 miles shorter than the established emigrant trails that meandered around mountain ranges. But Simpson's assessment was a bit too rosy (the actual savings was closer to 200 miles), and his commander quickly ordered him to stop promoting the route as an emigrant road. Even so, some 20,000 emigrants drove their covered wagons this way in the 1860s.

Happily, as it turns out, for the Pony Express, the Central Overland Trail was also developed as a stagecoach and mail-by-mule route by a hardworking competitor, George W. Chorpenning. Chorpenning held the federal contract for mail and stagecoach service between Salt Lake and San Francisco when Pony Express agents came sniffing around, looking for opportunity. The U.S. Post Office abruptly canceled his contract in May 1860, about a month after the Pony Express started operations, due in part to behind-the-scenes conniving by the Pony and others hoping to grab that contract for themselves. Even while Chorpenning's "Jackass Mail" was still up and braying — and without a government contract in hand, itself — the Pony took over

his route, brazenly moved into his stage and mail stations, seized his livestock and equipment, and hired away some of his key employees. Chorpenning brought a claim before Congress for his losses, but was still uncompensated when he died in 1894. Meanwhile, the Pony Express would share its pirated route and assets with a passenger, freight, and "heavy mail" stage line operated by its parent company, the Central Overland California & Pike's Peak Express Co.

Chorpenning's way stations became home and swing stations for the Pony Express. Home stations were located 75 to 100 miles apart, the length of a Pony relay, to provide bed and board for Express riders between their mail runs. Stage drivers and passengers also took meals and lodging there. Many of the other home stations along the trail from St. Joe to San Francisco were private homes or inns under contract with the Pony Express. Some, including Mormon-run contract stations across Utah, were reputable establishments with satisfactory service and attentive hosts, but others were filthy, flyspecked shanties where skinflint proprietors dished up inedible slop — and where a prudent traveler might prefer to skip a meal and sleep outside. Newspaperman Horace Greeley, English adventurer and writer Sir Richard Burton, and humorist Mark Twain wrote gritty descriptions of the stage and mail stations they visited during their overland travels in 1859-61.

The Stagecoach Inn at Fairfield served both Pony Express riders and passengers on overland stages.

Between home stations at 10- to 25-mile intervals were the swing stations, where station keepers would have fresh horses saddled and waiting for the approaching riders. A rider would leave his home

station with the mail pouch (called a mochila) as soon as it arrived, day or night and in any weather, change horses at each of the swing stations along his route, and pass the mochila to his relief rider at the next home station at the end of his relay. In this way mail moved steadily across the West, carried between the eastern and western Pony terminals in 10 to 17 days. In contrast, regular mail sent by ocean-going steamer took about 45 days for delivery — longer in stormy weather. Regular postage going overland by stagecoach was often left by the roadside when the driver needed to take on other freight, and the mail bag might remain there for weeks before another coach picked it up.

> *When the Pony Express dashed past, it seemed almost like the wind racing over the prairie.* — Mary Ann Stucki, 1860 Mormon emigration.

The Pony Express owes no small measure of its fleeting success to the hard work of many Mormon pioneers who blazed routes, located, built, and operated trailside stations, supervised employees, and rode with the mail. Major Howard Egan stands tall among these men. Egan arrived in Utah with the first 1847 pioneer party. In the late 1850s, he took a job as superintendent for Chorpenning's mail operation, and in that capacity scouted key parts of what would become Simpson's Central Overland road across the Great Basin. When the Pony Express elbowed Chorpenning aside, Egan became division superintendent for the Pony between Salt Lake and Robert's Creek, Nevada. He built additional stations and hired relay riders, and operated a home station from his Deep Creek ranch near today's Ibapah, Utah. Then in his mid-40s, Major Egan became the oldest man to ride for the Pony Express when he mounted up and carried the first eastbound mochila 75 miles from Rush Valley Station to Salt Lake City in April 1860. His sons, Howard R. Egan and Richard Egan, were Pony riders as well.

Two other well-known Latter-day Saints connected with the operation were widely reputed to be "Avenging Angels," a vigilante group that, as Mark Twain delicately put it, "conducted permanent disappearances of obnoxious citizens." These alleged Angels,

Ephraim Hanks and Orrin Porter Rockwell, owned contract stations for the Pony Express and Overland Stage in Utah Territory.

Hanks, a jovial, sandy-haired frontiersman with a grizzled beard and smiling mustache, ran the Mountain Dell Station near the head of today's Little Dell Reservoir. Mountain Dell was part trading post, part mail station, and part inn, where Eph's stepson worked as a Pony rider and his bustling "plural wives" served meals (on at least one occasion, boiled badger) to well-heeled stage passengers. "Port" Rockwell operated Rockwell's Station, a combined mail and stage station, hotel, and brewery near Bluffdale, south of Salt Lake City. Although capable of remarkable acts of kindness, Rockwell looked the part of a badman: his portrait reveals a physically powerful, bearded man with long curls and pale piercing eyes that stare you down across 150 dusty years. Like Wyatt Earp, Wild Bill Hickok, and other high-profile triggermen of his era, Port Rockwell briefly was a lawman, a deputy territorial marshal. Ironically, Rockwell and Hanks had been among the Mormon guerilla fighters who helped run Russell, Majors & Waddell into debt during the 1857-58 Utah War.

Despite the grim stories that circulated far and wide about the two, Pony riders and nervous travelers had nothing to fear from either man. In fact, Sir Richard Burton, during his 1860 trip to Salt Lake City, sought out and visited both and later wrote admiringly of them. Hanks and Rockwell held no blood grudge against their customers, and both Mountain Dell and Rockwell's were comfortable enough establishments. If anything, the notoriety of the two men cast protection over their guests and employees.

West of Camp Floyd, Utah Pony Express stations rarely were comfortable and some were distinctly unsafe. The lot of station employees, particularly in the deserts of western Utah and Nevada, was tedious, hard, hot, dirty, and dangerous. There was little to do day after day but guard and tend the livestock, cut hay and haul water, keep records of arrivals and departures, collect firewood, boil up some grub, sweat, swat flies, and watch for the distant plume of dust that signified an approaching Pony rider, stagecoach, wagon, or Indian war party.

It is a hard life, setting aside the chance of death — no less than three murders have been committed by the Indians during this year — the work is severe; the diet is sometimes reduced to wolf-mutton, or a little boiled wheat and rye, and the drink to brackish water ....
— Sir Richard Burton in *The City of the Saints*, an account of his 1860 stagecoach trip west.

The riders, at least, basked in the applause of the nation — their exploits were well-reported in newspapers and some became celebrities in their time — but their work was hard and dangerous, as well. Regardless of weather or warpath, these men rode out alone across the empty Utah desert, including the bleak, eerie area known as Paiute Hell.

Imagine a vast, waveless ocean stricken dead and turned to ashes; imagine this solemn waste tufted with ash-dusted sage-bushes; imagine the lifeless silence and solitude that belong to such a place .... The sun beats down with dead, blistering, relentless malignity; ... there is not the faintest breath of air stirring; there is not a merciful shred of cloud in all the brilliant firmament; there is not a living creature visible in any direction .... — Mark Twain in *Roughing It*, an account of his 1861 stagecoach trip west.

Simpson Springs Station, a sturdy stone building planted in the middle of this wasteland, provided much-needed water and brief respite for travelers. Beyond Simpson Springs is Dugway Station, where Sir Richard Burton discovered a station-keeper, a rider, and a curiously misplaced English bulldog sheltering within a rude hole in the desert floor. Several hand-dug wells nearby were bone dry, forcing the employees to haul water by wagon some 18 miles from Simpson Springs. The laborious chore still left time weighing heavy on their hands. Burton's Pony acquaintances passed the empty hours

The reconstructed Simpson Springs relay station in the Utah west desert provides visitors with a glimpse of the station keeper's daily life — the unsung heros of the Pony Express.

underground, carving "niches and Egyptian heads" into the dugout walls. The miserable station-keeper who greeted Horace Greeley at Dugway a year earlier, when it was Chorpenning's way station, had begged for newspapers, magazines — anything to relieve his mind-numbing boredom. Greeley kindly donated an old newspaper.

[Dugway Station] was a mere 'dug-out'— a hole four feet deep, roofed over with split cedar trunks, and provided with a rude adobe chimney. — Sir Richard Burton in *The City of the Saints*, an account of his 1860 stagecoach trip west.

It was about the forlornest spot I ever saw. —Horace Greeley, from his 1859 trip west by stagecoach and mail wagon.

West of Dugway is a mess of salt sloughs and gooey mud flats that forced the Pony Express and stagecoaches to swing five miles wide instead of cutting directly to the Fish Springs home station. Today Fish Springs is a quiet National Wildlife Preserve, but the place bustled with activity in the day of the Pony Express. Long before its brackish waters were appropriated by settlers and station-keepers, though, the sprawling wetland was home to native people. Here, for some 10,000 years, Indians had fished, trapped, hunted waterfowl and game, and harvested plant foods. Now it was theirs no longer.

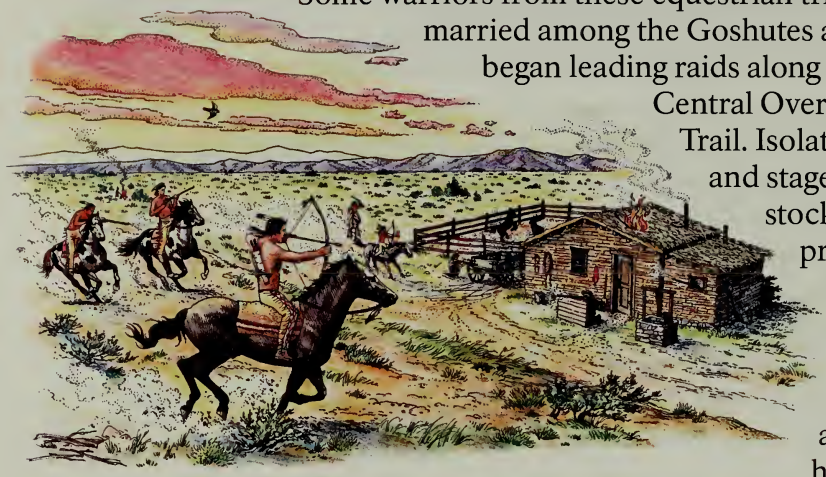
THE WARPATH

By 1860 the Goshutes' precarious balance with nature had long since tipped toward starvation. Their most important food, fuel, and water resources were taken up by emigrant campgrounds, settlements, farmers' fields, grazing livestock, mining camps, the military, and a string of stage and mail stations that squatted on every key waterhole between Camp Floyd and the Humboldt Sink. A federal Indian agent, working with Mormons, established a government farm at Deep Creek (Ibapah) and tried to teach the Indians to plant, but the effort failed. The Goshutes starved, and many travelers who encountered them along the various trails through the Great Basin seemed more repelled than moved by their poverty.

> *All of these are the lowest order of human beings eating roots, bugs, crickets & all such like things without any arms [weapons] of any kind and in most cases without arms or clothing excepting the women and the old men.* — Pardon Dexter Tiffany, 1849 California gold rush.

> *They are a terrible pest and nuisance to travelers and emigrants* .... — William Kelly in *An Excursion to California,* an account of his 1849 travels to California.

Of course, the Goshutes were not the only Great Basin people impacted by the arrival of white settlers. Conflicts began shortly after the Latter-day Saints settled in the Salt Lake Valley, a border zone between the powerful Ute and Shoshone tribes. Confrontations soon led to killings and retributions, and hostilities deepened as the Mormons began colonizing Ute country to the south and Shoshone territory to the north. Both tribes raided Mormon settlements in the 1850s and 60s, while Shoshones and their Bannock allies menaced travelers on the California Trail through southern Idaho and northeastern Nevada.



Some warriors from these equestrian tribes married among the Goshutes and began leading raids along the Central Overland Trail. Isolated mail and stage stations, stocked with provisions, their corrals full of cattle and fast horses, and defended by only a handful of men, made particularly tempting targets. Coaches and express riders, with their regular routes and schedules, might easily be taken, too, and made to pay for white incursions.

He said I had no right to cross their country. The land was theirs and they were going to drive out the white man, burn the stations, and kill the pony men. — Nick Wilson, Pony Express rider accosted and released by warriors in western Utah.

We hear a lot of praise for the boys that rode the ponies, and they deserve it; but I'm not forgettin' the boys that took care of the stations and the stock. It took real grit to stay with that job, always exposed to Indian arrows. — Wash Perkins, Pony Express rider.

In western Utah, Indian fighters attacked stage coaches, chased Express riders, and raided the Lookout Pass, Dugway, Willow Springs, and Deep Creek Stations, killing several men in the early 1860s. Soldiers from Camp Floyd were detailed to ride the coaches and escort emigrant wagon parties along the Central Overland Trail, and detachments patrolled the road and guarded the stage and mail stations. Although the military effort managed to keep the eastern part of the Central Overland road open, determined Paiute, Shoshone, and Bannock fighters farther west forced the Pony Express temporarily to suspend operations in May and June 1860. Losses

of personnel, horses, and station facilities amounted to more than $75,000, adding to the fledgling operation's money problems.

But Indian resistance and financial woes, serious as they were, did not bury the Pony Express. Technology did. About two months after the first mochila left St. Joseph, Congress authorized funding to build a transcontinental telegraph. Crews from Nebraska and what is now western Nevada began working toward each other, erecting poles and stringing wire along the Pony Express route. The lines met on Salt Lake City's Main Street. On October 24, 1861, Western Union ceremoniously linked the two segments and made near-instantaneous, coast-to-coast communications a reality. Two days later the now-obsolete Pony Express closed its doors. Mail that was already underway continued to its destination, with the last mochila arriving in San Francisco on November 20, 1861. The Pony's parent company, the Central Overland California & Pike's Peak Express Co., soon fell into bankruptcy and was acquired by "Stagecoach King" Ben Holladay. That operation continued under a new name, the Overland Stage Company.

Troubles along the Central Overland Trail outlived the Pony Express. In 1863, for example, several Camp Douglas soldiers assigned to protect Simpson Springs Station, which now served Holladay's Overland Stage Company, set out on a search-and-destroy mission against the Indians. A stage line employee named "Deaf Bill" Riley led the patrol six miles south to a peaceful Goshute encampment, where the troopers shot down women, children, and elders. One warm July morning not long after that, four soldiers guarding Canyon Station, at the mouth of Overland Canyon, stacked their weapons in the barn after chores and headed into the dugout for breakfast. A fifth man remained outside to finish currying a horse. Goshute warriors concealed nearby

A small stone monument identifies the location of the Pony Express station prior to its being burned in a raid.

shot that man — it was Deaf Bill Riley — and cut down the soldiers as they burst from the hole to run for their guns. In a final act of retribution the Goshutes burned the place to ashes, giving the site a second name, Burnt Station. The Overland Stage Company rebuilt Canyon Station at the upper end of the canyon, this time including a circular stone structure where defenders could take cover. It stands sentinel there still.

On October 12, 1863, the Goshutes ended hostilities by signing a peace treaty that allowed access to, but did not cede, their lands. Passively resisting occasional government attempts to move them to a Ute reservation in northeastern Utah, the Goshute people gathered and continued living — with little federal attention — alongside settlers on their traditional lands at Deep Creek/Ibapah and Skull Valley. Local Latter-day Saints, including genial Howard Egan, quietly helped them establish farms, acquire plows and seed, and learn to plant. Finally, President William Howard Taft set aside reserves for the Goshutes at Skull Valley (1912) and Deep Creek (1914), and President Woodrow Wilson enlarged the Skull Valley reservation (1919).The Goshutes remain in their homeland today.

CROSSROADS OF THE WEST

In the popular lore of the American West there is a hole where Utah ought to be.

The state's southern red rock country serves as a cinematic backdrop for movies about 19th century cattle drives, crime and justice, and cultural conflicts that play out in California, Wyoming, Arizona, and Texas, but almost never in Utah. Few fans of the Old West realize that outlaw Butch Cassidy, leader of the infamous Wild Bunch and subject of a popular 1969 movie, was the Utah-born son of Mormon handcart pioneers. The grand themes and iconic images of the West — covered wagons on the windblown prairie, thundering buffalo herds, bluecoats and plains warriors, frontier forts, wild and woolly boomtowns—touch on other places, not here. Utah's most legendary names, native peoples, and core stories, even the astonishing account of Brigham Young going toe-to-toe with the U.S. Army, are little known beyond state boundaries.

Yet events here helped to establish some of the overland trails, nurtured and shaped them, and finally brought them to a close.

Members of the Bidwell-Bartleson Party, blazing the first wagon trail into the Great Basin, wandered over Utah's Promontory Summit in 1841. Their eventual hard-won success encouraged others to try the trip and seek out better routes to California. One new California cutoff through Utah's Wasatch Mountains led to the Donner tragedy in the Sierra Nevada, a story of human endurance and courage that is still widely known today. The same cutoff brought an entire people, defined by religious belief rather than by a common language or country of origin, to colonize the Great Basin. Their capital city near the shores of the Great Salt Lake became a crucial supply stop and trail hub, a Crossroads of the West, for thousands of Forty-niners on their way to California. Tensions between Mormon and federal officials led to armed confrontation, a permanent military presence in Utah Territory, development of the Central Overland route to California, and financial losses for the already-shaky freighting company of Russell, Majors & Waddell. These events, in turn, helped pave the way for the opening of the Pony Express in April 1860. Some

19 months later, workmen in downtown Salt Lake City joined the eastern and western lines of the transcontinental telegraph and put an end to the far-famed horse-and-rider relay. Finally, 28 years after the Bidwell-Bartleson Party first trailed over Promontory Summit, dignitaries gathered at that location to hammer the golden spike that completed the transcontinental railroad and closed the overland emigration era.

As a result of its Mormon heritage and history, Utah is in some ways culturally distinct from other Western states. But it is not separate from them. Utah is an integral chapter of the big story of the American West.

THE OVERLAND PONY EXPRESS.—[Photographed by Savage, Salt Lake City, from a Painting by George M. Ottinger.]

Last Days of the Pony Express. Image if courtesy of the Library of Congress.

SITES AND POINTS OF INTEREST

Touring the Trails Across Utah

Auto tours for the California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express National Historic Trails begin on I-80 at the Wyoming/Utah state line southwest of Evanston, Wyoming, and follow Auto Tour Segment A to Salt Lake City. Trails and tour routes split there. Travel options from Salt Lake City are described on page 59.

Visitors joining the Utah trail tour from I-84 in Idaho on the Salt Lake Cutoff should consult Auto Tour Segment C. The route described here proceeds south to north, the direction most emigrants traveled. If traveling north to south, begin with entry C-3 on page 104 and work back toward Salt Lake City.

Maps and visitor guides for Salt Lake City are available on-line and by mail from several sources. Before your visit, consult the Salt Lake City Pioneer Tour on page 74 to identify any materials you might need to print or request ahead of time. This guide does not include a separate map for the city tour.

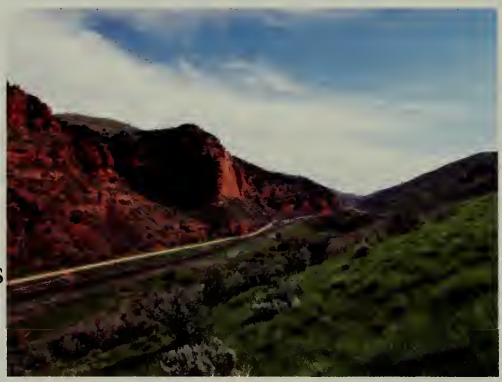
AUTO TOUR SEGMENT A: Wyoming Border To Salt Lake City, Utah — (Hastings Cutoff Of The California Trail, Mormon Pioneer Trail, And Pony Express Trail)

Auto Tour Segment A follows paved roads along the combined route of the Hastings Cutoff of the California Trail, the Mormon Trail, and the Pony Express Trail from the Wyoming/Utah border to the Utah/Nevada state line at Wendover. I-80 exit numbers referenced here deviate from numbers shown on Utah road maps and travel guides printed before 2006, but are consistent with numbers on current highway signs.

Begin this tour on westbound I-80 at the Wyoming/Utah state line. From that location, the historic corridor for the California, Mormon

Pioneer, and Pony Express Trails lies about 7 miles south of the freeway. The freeway alignment converges with the trail corridor about 4.8 miles southwest of the old railroad siding of Wahsatch, Utah. Left of the highway, faint trail traces marked with white fiberglass posts can be seen descending the distant hills about a half-mile southwest of Exit 187. From there, the combined corridor of the old trail and the modern highway heads into scenic Echo Canyon.

A-1. Head of Echo Canyon (between Wahsatch and Echo, UT). Echo Canyon is a natural conduit through the Wasatch Mountains, used for thousands of years by wildlife and native people migrating between the Rockies and the Great Basin. Once discovered by mountain men in the early 1800s, the 24-mile passage eventually became a thoroughfare for pack trains, commercial and emigrant wagons, Forty-niner brigades, military columns, handcart processions, the Pony Express, the Overland Stage, and the transcontinental telegraph. The Donner-Reed Party was the third emigrant wagon party to pass through the canyon.



Echo Canyon looking east from the state welcome center on I-80.

Today Echo Canyon is still a busy transportation corridor, occupied by I-80, the Union Pacific Railroad, a segment of the Old Lincoln Highway (the nation's first coast-to-coast automobile highway), and modern communications and utility lines. More than 160 years of development have altered the canyon, but fascinating traces of 19th century uses still are visible.

Directions: Westbound I-80 enters Echo Canyon between mileposts 188 and 187 southwest of Wahsatch.

As you approach Exit 185 on westbound I-80, look ahead and to the right toward the bare rampart of Castle Rock, an emigrant

Castle Rock on the north side of I-80 east of Echo Canyon.

landmark near the head of Echo Canyon. The Mormon pioneer company headed by Brigham Young, who had taken ill with a tick-borne infection, camped near here on July 14, 1847. The combined California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express Trail ran between the two modern railroad grades, and a Pony Express and stage station once stood on the grounds of the "old automobile graveyard" that is visible from the freeway. The site is on private property, not open to the public.

Continue west on I-80. A few miles ahead, travelers can:

Leave I-80 at Exit 178 (Emory) to take a side-trip and visit trail-related features along quiet Echo Canyon Road (the one-time Lincoln Highway), which parallels I-80. (This exit is not available from the eastbound lanes.) Continue with entry A-2 below.

OR,

Continue on I-80 to Exit 170 to visit the Echo Junction Welcome Center, which is accessible only from the westbound lanes of the freeway. The staffed center has pedestrian paths with a canyon overlook and interpretive wayside exhibits about the historic trails. The center also offers state maps, statewide travel information, state and national park brochures, restrooms, beverages, and picnic facilities. If planning to visit Mormon and emigration-related sites in Salt Lake City (refer to the Salt Lake City Pioneer Tour on page 74), pick up maps and guides to downtown here. The center is open year-round during daylight hours.

From the Welcome Center, continue westbound on I-80 and take Exit 169. Turn right at the end of the ramp and cross under the railroad

track. At the intersection with Echo Canyon Road, turn left to Echo and skip to entry A-8 on page 56.

OR,

Follow the designated Auto Tour Route along westbound I-80 directly to Salt Lake City, a distance of 36 miles from the community of Echo. This option leaves the Hastings Cutoff but follows the route of the old Golden Pass Road, which was improved and opened by Mormons as a wagon toll road in 1850. There are no trail-related stops on this route. On arriving at Salt Lake City, skip ahead to page 74 for further options.

A-2. Echo Canyon Road evolved from an Indian trail into a wagon road, an early automobile highway (the Old Lincoln Highway), and a federal highway (U.S.-30). Today it is a narrow, winding frontage road. Proceed slowly and be prepared to stop along the road shoulder to view the historical features described in the entries below. Many of these historic features are on private land; please observe them from the public right-of-way.

Echo Canyon road parallels I-80 and affords travelers the opportunity to see its many historical features.

Directions: Leave westbound I-80 at Exit 178 (Emory). Cross the bridge and pause at the cattle guard to set the trip odometer. Continue in a southwesterly direction, paralleling the freeway, to stop A-3 about 2 miles ahead.

A more detailed, full-color guide to all of the historic sites along Echo Canyon Road is available free from the Summit County Historical Society. Numbered brown signposts along Echo Canyon Road correspond to the Summit County historic sites guide. Also along this stretch of road are numbered red, white, and blue signposts that correspond to a separate Lincoln Highway tour guide. Copies of both guides

are available from the Summit County Courthouse at 60 North Main Street in Coalville, Utah, about 8 miles south of Echo on I-80 (Exit 162). To request copies by mail, call (435) 336-3015.

A three-foot-tall steel post marks the location where the Hanging Rock station once stood.

A-3. The Hanging Rock Pony Express Station (Echo Canyon), also called Halfway Station, was located near a spring about halfway down the canyon. Nothing remains of the relay station, but a Pony Express marker post standing in a trough-like wagon swale marks its approximate location. The "hanging rock" itself — a small natural bridge — is just around the curve to the south. The area was an emigrant campground.

Directions: From the cattle guard at Exit 178, enter Echo Canyon Road. Drive 2.3 miles and pull onto the right shoulder near a lone juniper by the side of the road. Look down off the road to the right about 25 feet to find the silver-colored steel post that marks the Pony Express station site. The trough where the post is located is emigrant wagon swale. Continue to odometer mile 2.5, just around the curve, to a turnout on the right marked with brown Summit County tour sign No. 9. Hanging Rock is the natural bridge to the right of the turnout. It is on private property; please do not trespass.

Continue southwest down Echo Canyon Road. At odometer mile 3.9, look toward the ridge top on the right to view a columnar rock formation and minor landmark known as Jack-in-the-Pulpit. The viewing location is marked by Summit County's brown tour sign No. 8. A private ranch entrance is on the right at odometer mile 4.1, and near the road to the left of the entrance is a brown T-rail marker (made of railroad rail) with an emigrant quote about camping in the area. About two miles beyond that the canyon begins to constrict. Before modern highways were built, this segment of Echo Canyon

was narrow, forcing wagon traffic to travel single-file. For the Mormon militia, this seemed a strategic location to stop or delay approaching federal troops.

A-4. Defensive Breastworks (Echo Canyon) positioned along the rim of the cliff to the right are barely visible in several places from the canyon floor. Mormon militiamen, fearing an attack on Salt Lake City by the U.S. Army, built the low rubble walls above the emigrant road in 1857. The breastworks would protect the defenders as they fired down on approaching federal troops. Because they are made of local sandstone from the cliffs and were meant to be unobtrusive, the structures can be difficult to see.

Defensive breastworks.

Directions: At odometer mile 7.3, pull into a turnout on the right side of the road to view a large wooden sign that describes the Mormon defense preparations in Echo Canyon. Continue to the next turnout at mile 7.7 and pause at Summit County's brown tour sign No. 7 for Billboard Bluff. From the turnout, look up at the base of the cliff face to see 19th century roadside advertisements painted directly onto the rock. (These are unassociated with the Utah War.)

Continue to odometer mile 7.8, watching for brown Summit County tour sign No. 6 on the left. From the tour-stop sign, face the cliff to the right of the road and look along the rim to see a low stone wall. Then turn and look east across the freeway to the bluffs on the opposite side of the canyon. Just below the alignment of telephone poles that crosses the slope, a faint horizontal line in the earth is sometimes visible, depending on the quality of the light and vegetation. The line is what remains of a defensive trench dug by the Mormon militia. Approaching federal troops were to be caught in crossfire from between the cliff-top breastworks and the entrenchment.

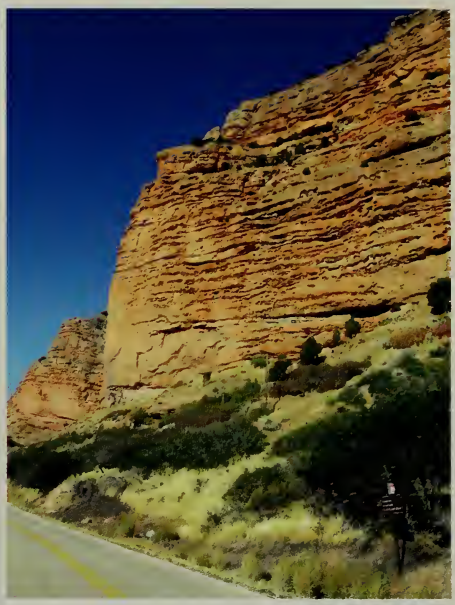
Now walk north along the roadside toward the speed limit sign and watch along the rim of the cliff for additional stone breastworks. Continue walking north to the first utility pole that is immediately next to the road at the curve where the canyon narrows. More breastworks are visible from here. In this area the militia also planted land mines made of oak barrels and 1-pound cans of gunpowder, dug deep trenches across the canyon floor to obstruct the passage of troops, and built a rock-and-earthen dam (no longer visible) to flood the canyon.

A-5. Death's Rock (Echo Canyon) is named for a fatal incident that occurred when a Mormon militiaman, during horseplay, shot and killed a fellow militiaman who was standing on the rocky crag. The victim was the only Mormon to die in the 1857 troubles between Utah Territory and the federal government. (The only U.S. Army death, which occurred in Wyoming, resulted from a heart attack.)

Death's Rock in Echo Canyon prior to the construction of I-80.
Photograph is courtesy of John Eldredge.

Directions: From the last fortifications turnout at tour sign No. 6, continue southwest (toward Echo) to odometer mile 8.1, a turnout on the right marked by Summit County's brown tour sign No. 5. Standing at the sign, turn around and look back up the canyon in the direction of Wyoming. The outcrop where the death occurred is on the left (west) side of the road.

A-6. The Steamboat Rocks (Echo Canyon), a series of geological formations that protrude into the canyon like a row of great ships at dock, were another emigrant landmark. They were called by other names, as well, including The Great Eastern and Noah's Ark. Southwest of Steamboat Rocks is a meadow where Brigham Young's 1847 company and later emigrants camped.



Steamboat Rocks.

Directions: At odometer mile 9.1 on the Echo Canyon Road tour, the Steamboat Rocks are the large bluffs just ahead on the right. A flag is sometimes visible on the projecting ledge of one of the formations. The Steamboat Rocks also can be viewed from the overlook at Echo Junction Welcome Center on I-80.

A-7. A second Cliff-face Billboard is painted on the rock wall at the base of the Steamboat Rocks. One of the ads promotes Salt Lake House, a stagecoach stop and comfortable hotel on downtown Salt Lake City's Main Street.

A century ago, Salt Lake City businesses sometimes wrote advertisements promoting their services on the canyon walls.

Directions: At odometer mile 9.2, pull into the turnout on the left, marked by Summit County tour sign No. 4. Look on the right, at the foot of the Steamboat Rocks, to see the faded billboard.

Continue along Echo Canyon Road, passing a Utah Department of Transportation facility at odometer mile 9.7 and the I-80 Echo interchange at mile 10.7.

A historic marker identifies the site where the Weber Pony Express Station once stood.

A-8. The Weber Station (Echo, UT) began as a settler's isolated log cabin and blacksmith shop in 1854 and later served as a stage stop and Pony Express home station. As Union Pacific workers poured into the area in 1868, a rollicking railroad boom-town sprang up around the station. Local lore holds that several artifacts and a love letter to a Pony Express rider were discovered hidden in the walls of the old station building when it was torn down years later, but that story, like many others concerning the Pony Express, has been discredited. The stone building in which the items supposedly were found was built around 1866, at least six years after the Pony Express shut down.

Directions: A granite memorial commemorating the station (nothing remains of the building itself) is at a turnout on the right at odometer mile 11.3. The site is also marked with Summit County's brown tour sign No. 17 and with a silver-colored Pony Express marker post.

The road now turns sharply, following a narrow strip of land between the bluffs and the Weber River. Ahead at Echo (odometer mile 11.5), the road splits. Turn right onto the frontage road that passes the café and parallels the canyon road.

A cluster of interpretive wayside exhibits provide travelers with some early history of the community at Echo.

A-9. The Echo Town Interpretive Area (Mary Avenue & Durant Street, Echo) includes interpretive wayside exhibits about James Bromley and the Pony Express, the Mormon Pioneer Trail, and the settlement history of the area. **Directions:** The interpretive area is on the right at odometer reading 11.8. From here, the frontage road merges with Echo Road, which continues northwest toward Henefer.

A-10. Temple Camp and Supplication Hill (northwest of Echo) are named for the prayers offered here on July 17, 1847, on behalf of Brigham Young and other members of the party who were seriously ill. A wayside exhibit tells the story.

A small historical marker identifies the location of Supplication Hill.

Directions: From stop A-9, continue northwest on Echo Road. A Pioneer Memorial sign denotes the interpretive turnout, which is on the right at odometer mile 12.4. Look to the hills to the northeast: the stone pillar that peeks up between the hills is Sentinel Rock. The second hilltop beyond Sentinel Rock is the Supplication Hill where prayers were offered.

Continue toward Henefer on Echo Dam Road. At odometer reading 13.1 miles, look to the right to see the Witches Rocks. This cluster of geological hoodoos was a minor landmark often sketched and described in emigrant journals. Nearby, a white fiberglass trail post marks the location of the Hastings Cutoff wagon trace. A couple miles ahead, the 1846 Donner-Reed Party faced a critical decision.

About a mile north of Henefer, the Weber River begins a 6-mile rush through a narrow gorge past Devil's Slide. The stream slows and plays through pretty Morgan Valley, then gushes through another cleft called Devil's Gate before spilling from the mouth of the mountains south of Ogden. Today the torrent is tamed and I-84, carved into the mountainside, provides easy passage. But in 1846 there was no room for a wagon road through the narrows: the canyon floor was a frothing, boulder-choked stream channel edged by cliffs and steep talus. Despite the obvious danger, two wagon companies that started along the Hastings Cutoff about a week ahead of the Donner-Reed Party tried to pass through Weber Canyon. The larger train lost a wagon and a yoke of oxen to the hungry chasm at Devil's Gate.

Historical markers identify the Weber River Crossing site.

A-11. Weber River Crossing (Henefer, UT). In this vicinity the 20-wagon Donner-Reed Party found a note from Lansford Hastings warning them not to attempt passage through Weber Canyon. Not knowing how to proceed, the bewildered emigrants camped near here (where I-80 crosses the Weber River) for 5 precious days while James Reed rode ahead to find Hastings, who was escorting an earlier wagon train westward. Based on Hastings's advice, the emigrants crossed the Weber River here on Aug. 11 and cut their own way through the Wasatch Mountains to the Salt Lake Valley. Interpretive exhibits at a turnout near the river crossing touch on these events and also tell of a deputy sheriff who drowned at the ford while rescuing emigrants in 1853. From here, the trail crossed streams more than 40 times before entering Salt Lake Valley.

Directions: The turnout is on the left, overlooking the river ford site, at odometer mile 15.0. A Pioneer Memorial road sign denotes the turnout.

The road blazed by the Donner-Reed Party and improved by Mormon pioneers the following summer became the main road into the Salt Lake Valley. A primitive road later built through Weber River Canyon to Ogden was used by local residents and a few emigrants. The transcontinental railroad was constructed through the canyon in 1868-69.

On the right side of the road at odometer mile 15.4 is a large trail information sign supported by stone pillars. Here the road splits. Bear left and follow Echo Road/UT-65 onto the overpass toward Henefer.

To leave the auto tour and explore Weber Canyon, turn right on the overpass and enter westbound I-84 at the Exit 115 interchange. Past the next exit (Exit 111), watch for a viewing turnout for Devil's Slide. The slide, a chute formed by two protruding layers of rock, is on the south (left) side of the highway. Take Exit 108 and enter eastbound I-84 to return to Henefer and continue the auto tour, or follow the freeway through to I-15 at Riverdale. From Riverdale, to rejoin the Hastings Cutoff of the California Trail, the Mormon Pioneer Trail, and the Pony Express Trail at Salt Lake City, turn south on I-15 and consult Further Options and Directions on page 73; or, to join the Salt Lake Cutoff to the California Trail at City of Rocks National Reserve in Idaho, turn north on I-15 and skip to entry C-2 on page 102.

To continue on the combined corridor of the Hastings Cutoff of the California Trail, the Mormon Pioneer Trail, and the Pony Express Trail to Salt Lake City, follow UT-65 into Henefer. About 13 miles southwest of Henefer, UT-65 through East Canyon is typically closed October through May due to snow. Inquire locally or phone 511 for an automated status report if visiting during those months.

At the north edge of Henefer, turn left to follow UT-65 as it heads south and becomes the Pioneer Trail Memorial Highway. An Auto Tour Route directional sign marks the turn into Main Canyon, where the Donner-Reed Party began breaking trail through the mountains. Zero your trip odometer here. Watch for white fiberglass posts that signify the presence of original wagon trace.

A-12. Henefer Pioneer Trails Park (Henefer, UT) has a memorial and several interpretive exhibits about the Donner-Reed, Mormon pioneer, and Pony Express history of the trail in this area.

Directions: The park is on the left at odometer reading 0.4.

Interpretive exhibits inform modern travelers of the experiences pioneers had enroute to Salt Lake City.

A-13. Spring Creek (southwest of Henefer) was the site of a Mormon depot established during the Utah War of 1857-58. The depot provisioned militiamen who were building defenses for the expected assault by U.S. troops headed this way. Interpretive exhibits tell the story; no ruins are visible.

Directions: An interpretive turnout is on the right at odometer reading 3.2 miles.

An historical marker identifies the site of the Spring Creek Depot.

White trail markers ahead on the right show the wagon route up onto the ridge.

Continue south on UT-65 through Main Canyon. At odometer reading 5.0 look for trail trace through the sagebrush along the right side of the road.

Historical marker identifies the beginning of the Hogsback Summit.

A-14. Hastings Cutoff and Mormon Trail Wagon Ruts at Hogsback Summit (southwest of Henefer), marked by white fiberglass trail posts, are clearly visible along the right side of the road beyond the fence line at the Summit and Morgan County boundary. Just ahead at Hogsback Summit, the pioneers looked west and saw a discouraging jumble of mountains. An interpretive sign at the turnout tells the story.

Directions: Look for the swales on the right near the Morgan County sign at odometer reading 5.7 miles.

Continue down the south side of the Hogsback divide. Wagons followed Dixie Hollow, the ravine to the right side of today's paved road. The hollow bristled with brush and its boulder-choked bottom was too narrow for wagons to pass. The Donner-Reed wagon party grubbed a dangerous sideling trail along the sloping bank before dropping, exhausted, into their first camp beyond the Weber River. Mormon pioneers improved the rough track, but despite their efforts, many wagons over the years tumbled sideways off the trail.

Just ahead, Dixie Hollow narrows and becomes impassable to wagons.

A-15. Broad Hollow, which drains into Dixie Hollow near the Donner-Reed campsite of August 11, provided a detour around the Dixie Hollow chokepoint. The pioneers veered northwest up Broad Hollow, turned west across a wide bench, and then dropped south again to East Canyon Creek and through today's East Canyon State Park.

A stone monument marks the location where pioneers turned west.

A monument commemorates their effort. Some researchers think the two-track to the right of the monument may be the original trail alignment, but it might be a more recent ranch road.

Directions: The monument is at a turnout on the right at odometer reading 7.4 miles.

A road junction is located at odometer mile 8.0. Reset your trip odometer here and bear left to stay on UT-65, following the Auto Tour Route directional sign toward East Canyon Reservoir.

East Canyon Reservoir State Recreation Area.

A-16. East Canyon Overlook provides a view of the reservoir, which submerges the original trail between East Canyon State Park and East Canyon Resort. Wagons entered the canyon near the modern boat ramp on the opposite shore and continued up the creek. Here the Donner-Reed Party hacked a passage through endless willow thickets, but less than a year later re-growth forced the Mormon pioneers to clear the way once more.

Directions: The turnout is on the right at about odometer mile 9.3. From there, continue south along the rim of the lake.

UT-65 and the Hastings Cutoff diverge temporarily beyond the south end of East Canyon Reservoir at odometer reading 13.7 miles. There the highway curves right and a gravel road branches off from the pavement, continuing south along the original trial alignment. At this road junction you can:

Reset your trip odometer and bear right to stay on the highway and rejoin the trail 5.5 miles ahead at Big Mountain Pass. Follow UT-65 as it curves west into Little Dutch Hollow and squirms up the north flank of Big Mountain. Skip to entry A-17 on page 66.

OR,

Continue south (straight ahead) onto unpaved Jeremy Ranch Road for a pleasant backcountry side-trip and a hike along an important segment of the combined Hastings Cutoff, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express Trails. This option entails a round-trip drive of about 7 miles on a bladed road that is suitable when dry for 2-wheel-drive passenger cars. For this drive, consult the ***Optional Backcountry Route: East Canyon/Little Emigration Canyon*** *below. For hike planning, preview the Little Emigration Recreation Trail entry on page 65 and the Big Mountain Pass to Little Dell Recreation Trail entry on page 67.*

OPTIONAL BACKCOUNTRY ROUTE: East Canyon/Little Emigration Canyon

A sign for Large Spring and Mormon Flat marks the junction of Jeremy Ranch Road with UT-65. Reset your trip odometer here. Now enjoy a leisurely drive along East Canyon Creek. The first emigrants, in contrast, had to ford the creek 13 times in 8 miles while clearing passage through dense stands of willow, brambles, and aspen that choked the valley floor. Many emigrants considered this stretch of road to be the worst on the entire overland journey.

Sites of interest in East Canyon are:

Bauchmann's/East Canyon Pony Express and Stage Station. After turning onto Jeremy Ranch Road, continue south on the main road. At odometer mile 0.2, look east (left) to see a log cabin that was the original Bauchmann's Pony Express Station. The building has been moved and remodeled, and does not retain its historic appearance. Its original location was about a half-mile south of here. The cabin is private property; please view it from the road.

East Canyon Pony Express station.
Photograph is courtesy of the Utah State Historical Society.

Trail Ruts. On the right at odometer mile 2.6 is a driveway turnout with an interpretive wayside exhibit about the Mormon Trail. Enter the pedestrian gate to the left (do not enter the private gate on the right) and walk south to follow original remnants of the combined Mormon Pioneer, California, and Pony Express Trail through the sagebrush toward Large Springs Camp, just ahead. Caution: ticks are particularly abundant here in the spring and early summer.

Large Spring Camp Overlook and Site. At odometer mile 2.8, pause for a view of Large Spring and the associated camping area, on the right. The main party of Latter-Day Saints, traveling between the scouting group a few miles ahead and Brigham Young's sick-wagons to the rear, camped on the sagebrush flat above the spring on July 20, 1847. (The Donner-Reed Party drove past the spring and camped 1.5 miles up the Little Emigration Canyon trail, ahead.) Continue about 0.1 mile and turn into the driveway on the right to view the site and a wayside exhibit. Enter a pedestrian gate at the fence to follow the white trail markers down the hill to the left to the Large Spring group camp, managed by East Canyon State Park. To drive to the campground, continue ahead another 0.1 mile to the vehicle entrance. Day use of the site is free, but there is a fee for camping. To reserve the site for overnight use, call the Utah State Parks Reservation Center at (800) 322-3770.

Mormon Flat. At odometer mile 3.3, turn right into Mormon Flat, another state-operated group camp. Wayside exhibits here tell of the Donner-Reed and Mormon pioneer experiences in this area. Brigham Young's small rear-guard party camped here on July 22. At the top of the low bluff to the west is a low stone breastwork built by the Mormon militia in 1857 for defense against federal troops. Also here is the trailhead for the Little Emigration Canyon Recreation Trail (see next entry). Park to explore the area. Day use at Mormon Flat is free but there is a fee for camping. To reserve the site for overnight use, call the Utah State Parks Reservation Center at (800) 322-3770. This facility has public toilets but no drinking water.

Just below the skyline of the upper right corner are the militia fortifications developed in 1857.

Mormon Flat to Big Mountain Pass: The Little Emigration Canyon Recreation Trail. From Mormon Flat, the trail corridor turns northwest up Little Emigration Canyon toward Big Mountain Pass. Today this intact segment is a hike-and-bike trail managed by East Canyon State Park, but once it bustled with heavier traffic: the Donner-Reed Party, later California pioneers, the 1847 Brigham Young company, Mormon handcart emigrants, stagecoaches and freight wagons, the U.S. Army, and the Pony Express all went this way. Wagon swales and deeply eroded ruts still mark their passage. The Donner-Reed Party camped for 4 nights near beaver ponds about 1.5 miles up Little Emigration Canyon while clearing the trail up to Big Mountain Pass.

The narrow canyon was also fortified for defense. Cross the footbridge and follow the trail to the mouth of Little Emigration Canyon. Mormon breastworks are visible on bluffs overlooking both sides of the creek. Visitors may hike up to and explore the fortifications. Please tread lightly and protect these historic features, which are unique within the Utah State Parks system.

Parking and trail access are free. Bicycles are permitted but motor vehicles are prohibited on the trail. Carry water and be prepared for changing weather conditions.

The 4.5-mile sustained climb from Mormon Flat to Big Mountain Pass takes 2.5 to 5 hours to hike and can be strenuous for those unaccustomed to high altitude. The trail starts at about 6,100 feet in elevation and ends at 7,420 feet, a gain of more than 1,300 feet. Total slope is about a 5.5% grade, but the last half-mile is roughly 12.7% grade. Visitors who bike or hike to the summit must make private arrangements (there is no public shuttle) for a vehicle to meet them at the rest area there. Some visitors hike or bike up and back, but others prefer just to explore the local area around Mormon Flat. Westbound emigrants started at Mormon Flat and hiked up the mountain — imagine hauling a loaded handcart up this trail! From Big Mountain Pass, a second

segment of hiking and biking trail along the historic wagon route continues westward another 5 miles down Mountain Dell Canyon to Little Dell Reservoir. That trail is described in entry A-18.

When leaving Mormon Flat, you can:

Retrace the drive up Jeremy Ranch Road to UT-65 and resume the driving tour. At the junction, reset your trip odometer and turn left onto the highway. Drive 5.4 miles to the Big Mountain rest area, entry A-17.

OR,

Continue south on Jeremy Ranch Road for approximately 4 miles to I-80. Enter the westbound lanes and drive to Salt Lake City, the western terminus of the Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail. See further options and directions on page 85. This freeway route bypasses nearly 15 miles of the Hastings Cutoff and numerous significant sites related to the Donner-Reed Party, the Mormon emigration, and the Pony Express.

View from the summit of Big Mountain looking west toward the Salt Lake Valley.

A-17. Big Mountain Pass provided emigrants their first happy glimpse of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. But reaching the valley required a hair-raising descent: wagons, with high centers of gravity, could not switchback down unimproved side-hill slopes for fear of toppling over and crashing down the mountainside. Also, oxen cannot balance nor wagons brake effectively when traveling "sidling" along a hill. Most emigrants locked their wheels with chains and skidded their wagons straight down the mountainside.

Walk to the edge of the parking area and look west to see the grand view once shared by emigrants on the Hastings Cutoff and Mormon Pioneer Trail. Now look at the ground beyond the edge of the parking area. The deep scars that dive straight down the mountain are wagon ruts, gouged into the earth by skidding, iron-sheathed wheels and deepened by years of erosion. Today's UT-65 twists and turns down the mountain, crossing and re-crossing the old trail scar. Watch for those crossings, marked with signs, as you continue along the highway.

Directions: The Big Mountain Pass rest area is on the left side of the road 5.4 miles past the turnoff for Jeremy Ranch Road. Hikers and bikers on the Little Emigration Canyon recreation trail will enter from the north side of the rest area.

To hike and bike the emigrant trail another 2.7 to 5 miles, see entry A-18 below. To continue the drive along UT-65, skip to entry A-19. During the drive, look back up the mountainside to see trail swales intersecting the highway switchbacks.

A-18. Big Mountain to Little Dell Recreation Trail. A second segment of the hike-and-bike trail begins on the south side of the Big Mountain Pass parking area west of the restroom. This trail approximates the pioneer route down the mountain for about 2.7 miles to Affleck Park and then continues another 2.7 miles to the north end of Little Dell Reservoir. Hikers and bikers can make private arrangements for pick-up at either location. Along the way, the trail intersects UT-65 at an uncontrolled crossing on a hairpin curve with limited visibility; use caution when crossing the highway.

A sign marks the beginning of the hiking trail down the west side of Big Mountain.

Directions: Hike or bike the well-defined trail to Affleck Park. At the south end of the park, either follow the access road up the hill and out to UT-65 to meet your ride at the

entrance (park rules prohibit vehicles from entering without a campsite reservation) or cross the creek and continue south on the hiking trail. Beyond Affleck Park, the trail crosses to the east side of UT-65 and continues south. The trail forks as it approaches an RV parking area near the water at Little Dell Reservoir. Follow the right fork up the hill to the reservoir fee entrance to meet your pre-arranged ride.

Emigrants crossed Mountain Dell Creek 12 times in 5 miles.

A historic marker identifies the location where Young's scouts camped.

A-19. At Quaking Asp Grove near the foot of Big Mountain, Brigham Young's advance scouts camped on July 20, 1847, while the main emigrant group spent the night at Large Spring. A wayside exhibit tells the story; the historic wagon road is west of the turnout. **Directions:** Continue down the mountain on UT-65. At mile 6.0, look ahead up the mountain for a view of the slope that the wagons descended. The wagon trail crosses UT-65 at mile 7.5, and the interpretive turnout is on the right side of UT-65 at odometer mile 8.5.

Drivers, to pick up hikers at Affleck Park continue south on the highway for about 0.1 mile and turn right at the entrance to the campground. Do not enter the park unless you have a campsite reservation, but wait near the highway for hikers to arrive. To reserve a group campsite, call (801) 483-6705.

A-20. Little Dell Reservoir (northeast of Salt Lake City) has submerged this segment of the original emigrant trail. The Donner-Reed Party, discovering that the terrain farther down the canyon was unsuitable for wagon passage, camped a few miles south of here in Mountain Dell Canyon for several days while cutting a road over Little Mountain to the west. Later emigrants camped throughout

Little Dell Reservoir.

the area now occupied by the reservoir. The **Mountain Dell Pony Express Station,** a contract mail and stage station operated by Mormon proprietor Ephraim Hanks, was located near the head of the reservoir, but its exact location is unknown. An overlook and interpretive wayside exhibits are located at the reservoir entrance. Admission is $5/car; ask at the gate for permission to enter just to visit the interpretive exhibits at the overlook. At Little Dell Reservoir visitors will find a picnic area and restrooms but no campground or drinking water. Little Dell is open to pedestrian access year-round during daylight hours. The entrance for motor vehicles is open 8 a.m.–dusk from Memorial Day weekend–Oct. 31.

Directions: Continue down the mountain on UT-65. The reservoir fee station is on the left at about odometer reading 10.8 miles.

Continue southwest down the mountain. At odometer mile 11.4 the highway splits.

To follow the combined Hastings Cutoff, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express Trail down Emigration Canyon to Salt Lake City, turn right onto Emigration Canyon Road and proceed to stop A-21.

OR,

To connect to I-80 and follow the route of the old Golden Pass toll road into Salt Lake City, continue straight on UT-65 along the reservoir. Watch on the right for a trail crossing sign and deep wagon swale. On the left farther down the road is a turnout with a stone monument commemorating the Donner-Reed Party and the 1847 Mormon pioneers. Continue to the I-80 interchange and enter the westbound lanes. Upon approaching Salt Lake City, consult page 76 for more options.

The view from Little Mountain Summit looking southeast toward Little Dell Reservoir.

A-21. Little Mountain Summit (Emigration Canyon Road) posed another steep climb for weary travelers and livestock. Here emigrants had to double- or triple-team their oxen for the ascent, then lock their wagon wheels and skid down the mountainside to Emigration Canyon. A stone monument, an interpretive wayside exhibit about the Mormon Trail, and restrooms are located at a turnout here.

Directions: The turnout is on the left side of Emigration Canyon Road at odometer mile 13.0. Look down-slope from the wayside exhibit toward a white fiberglass post set between two red sandstone blocks, which marks wagon swales approaching the crest of the mountain. The trail alignment continues diagonally across the highway. Carefully cross to the opposite side of the road and look down the hillside to view wagon ruts descending Little Mountain. Now look into the distance. Here Brigham Young's scouts caught their second joyful glimpse of the Salt Lake Valley.

Continue down the mountain on Emigration Canyon Road. The trail alignment crosses the highway at odometer reading 13.9.

A historical marker identifies the location of the "Last Camp" in Emigration Canyon.

A-22. Brigham Young's Last Camp (northwest of Salt Lake City) before entering the Salt Lake Valley is commemorated by a granite monument at a roadside turnout. Here Young's small sick-party, delayed by his illness, spent the night of July 23, 1847. The other members of the Mormon pioneer company had entered the Salt Lake Valley the previous day.

Directions: The turnout and monument are on the right at odometer mile 15.5.

Continue westerly along Emigration Canyon Road. At odometer reading 18.3 miles, a small brown sign denotes **Last Creek Camp,** *the final trailside campsite of the main Mormon pioneer company that preceded Brigham Young into the valley. The Donner-Reed Party camped here almost a year earlier.*

A-23. Donner Hill (Emigration Canyon Road, Salt Lake City) hammered yet another nail into the Donner-Reed coffin. For 12 days the emigrants had gnawed a track through the rugged Wasatch wilderness, and now, at the very edge of the Salt Lake Valley, limestone outcrops and dense willows blocked their exit from the mouth of Emigration Canyon. The discouraged travelers pulled to the left out of the creek bottom and up the 200-foot-high ridge that thereafter would bear their name. The effort nearly used up the strength of their oxen. The next year Brigham Young's vanguard pioneer party, having more men for the labor, opened a road through the blockage, avoiding the hill climb, in just 4 hours' time. The current roadbed approximates their route.

Today, Emigration Canyon is widened and the top of Donner Hill has been leveled to make room for residential development. But the hill is still impressive and Emigration Creek, edged by willow and scrub oak, still runs along the south side of Emigration Canyon Road. Visitors can easily envision how this spot looked in 1846-47.

Directions: On the right at odometer mile 20 is another small sign for Donner Hill. A stone monument commemorating Donner Hill is on the left where the road curves to the south. At that location the hill is in front of you, easy to see, with a condominium at the top. Use caution when crossing the oncoming lane to enter or leave the widened road shoulder at the monument. Then continue down Emigration Canyon Road around the S-curve. If traffic permits, turn left at odometer mile 20.6 into an unmarked entrance for Rotary Glen Park. If you miss the entrance, turn left onto the next paved road, Crestview Drive, and turn around at a safe location to return to the intersection. Turn right and make an immediate right turn into Rotary Glen Park. Now go left across the parking lot and

follow the dirt access road to the east. End at a gravel parking lot. Look across the small reservoir toward Donner Hill, the ridge to the northeast. The emigrants ascended the ridge on the north side of the condominiums. From this vantage, the steepness of the climb is evident. Take the opportunity here or at the picnic area to the west to explore Emigration Creek.

The evening of their arrival on July 22, the Donner-Reed Party encamped a short distance beyond the hilltop with the broad Salt Lake Valley stretched at their feet. A grassy park along the ridge, adjacent to Crestview Drive, is named Donner Park in commemoration of that campsite. The next day the emigrants descended the ridge and traveled across the valley to the Jordan River. From there, the Donner-Reed Party continued along the south shore of the Great Salt Lake.

The National Pony Express Monument is near the entrance to This is the Place Heritage Park.

A-24. This Is The Place Heritage Park (2106 Sunnyside Avenue, Salt Lake City) commemorates the arrival of Mormon pioneers in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. Mormon tradition holds that when Brigham Young first gazed on the valley from this vicinity on July 24, 1847, he experienced a heavenly vision that led him to declare, "It is enough. This is the right place." Inside the 450-acre park is the National Pony Express Monument with a replica Pony Express station, a dramatic Avard Fairbanks sculpture of a relay rider changing horses, and several interpretive wayside exhibits.

Statuary Walk east of the Pony Express monument includes other sculptures and the 60-foot high This Is The Place Monument, with bronze figures of Brigham Young and other early church leaders. Around the monument base are *bas relief* depictions of significant figures in Utah history. Beyond the nearby visitor center is Heritage Village, a reconstructed village of original pioneer-era buildings

where costumed docents and historical interpreters share history and demonstrate early crafts and trades. Young visitors can ride ponies and trains, make crafts, and pet farm animals here. Open daily 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Admission to the Pony Express monument, Statuary Walk, This is the Place Monument, and the visitor center is free. Admission to Heritage Village varies seasonally.

Directions: From the Rotary Glen Park exit at Crestview Drive, turn west (left) onto Sunnyside Avenue. The entrance to This Is The Place Heritage Park is on the right 0.7 mile beyond Crestview Drive (odometer mile 22.1). Parking for the Pony Express monument is on the right shortly after entering the park. Continue east and up the hill to the visitor center and other attractions.

The Latter-day Saints were home at last. This Is The Place Heritage Park, near the location where Brigham Young first surveyed the valley, is considered the terminus of the Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail. But as the City of the Saints grew from a rustic frontier village to a bustling territorial capital, many California-bound travelers paused here for a layover to rest, re-supply, or spend the winter — or, as in the case of English adventurer Sir Richard Burton, to satisfy their curiosity about Brigham Young and the Mormons. The Pony Express descended the canyon and went through town, too, carrying mail to a home station on Main Street.

Salt Lake City, a pioneer way-station as well as a destination, is rich in the combined history of the three trails.

Further Options and Directions

To visit museums and trails-era historic localities for the Mormon Pioneer, California, and Pony Express Trail in downtown Salt Lake City, consult the Salt Lake City Pioneer Tour on page 76.

To continue the auto tour along the California and Pony Express Trails, exit This Is The Place Heritage Park and turn west (right) onto Sunnyside Avenue. At the second traffic light, turn south (left) onto 2100 East/Foothill Drive. Stay on the Foothill Drive for about 3 miles and follow the signs to enter westbound I-80.

About 4 miles ahead is a complex highway interchange where I-80 turns north and briefly merges with I-15. There you have a choice:

To follow the interstate highway along the designated Auto Tour Route for the California and Pony Express National Historic Trails to Nevada, follow the signs to stay on westbound I-80 and skip to Auto Tour Segment B on page 90.

To follow the designated Auto Tour Route for the Salt Lake Cutoff and join the California Trail at City of Rocks in Idaho, merge onto northbound I-15 and consult Auto Tour Segment C, beginning on page 105.

To follow the original Pony Express Trail route along mostly unpaved roads from Salt Lake City to the Nevada border, merge onto southbound I-15 and consult ***Auto Tour Segment D: Pony Express Trail National Back Country Byway*** *on page 110.*

SALT LAKE CITY PIONEER TOUR
(California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express Trails)

Getting Around

Fort Douglas National Historic District is located on the University of Utah campus, which occupies the old fort grounds. Downtown sites are located between 400 South Street and 300 North Street and between West Temple Street and 200 East Street.

Free maps and walking guides to Salt Lake City are available on-line from:
The Utah Heritage Foundation at www.utahheritagefoundation.org/tours-and-events/self-guided-tours and
The Salt Lake Convention and Visitors Bureau at www.visitsaltlake.com/includes/media/docs/slcity0608map.pdf and www.visitsaltlake.com/includes/media/docs/slvalley0608map.pdf

City maps and brochures also are available free from the Echo Welcome Center on westbound I-80 at Echo; from the City & County Building at 400 South and State Street in Salt Lake City; and from the Utah Visitor Information Center at 100 South and West Temple Street downtown. Please consult these maps when visiting the downtown historical sites described in this Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide.

Walking

Downtown is pedestrian-friendly and walking tours of the area are popular, but distances shown graphically on printed guides can be deceptive. Salt Lake City blocks are 1/8 mile in length, nearly twice as long as blocks in other cities, and the streets are extra-wide because, according to Mormon lore, Brigham Young designed them to allow an ox-drawn wagon to make a mid-street U-turn. (However, wide streets were characteristic of Mormon-built communities long before the Latter-day Saints arrived in Utah under Young's leadership.) A 3-block walk in Salt Lake City is equivalent to 5 or 6 blocks in other towns and the distance around one block is a half-mile. If walking, expect this tour and related museum visits to take a day.

Parking and Public Transportation

Metered curbside parking is available on most streets, and downtown Salt Lake City has many pay-to-park lots and garages. A light-rail train called TRAX carries passengers free of charge between the Salt Lake City Library (which has a parking garage) at 200 East 400 South Streets and Central Station at 600 West and 200 South Streets. Trains run every 15 minutes on weekdays and less frequently on weekends. TRAX platforms are located in front of the library on 400 South Street, along Main Street, and on South Temple Street. When taking TRAX back to the library from downtown, be sure to catch the University train, not the Sandy train.

To travel beyond the free fare zone, purchase tickets from vending machines at TRAX platforms before boarding the train. Go to www.rideuta.com/ for route and free-fare zone maps, TRAX schedules, and fare information. Maps and schedules also are available at the City & County Building at 400 South and State Street, and at the Utah Visitor Information Center at 100 South and West Temple Street, and are posted at each boarding platform. A TRAX platform is located on 100 South Street near the visitor information center.

Sites of Interest

To go downtown from This Is The Place Heritage Park, turn west (right) from the park exit onto Sunnyside Avenue. Stay in the right lane. Approaching the second stoplight, bear right and merge onto Foothill Drive. To begin the tour at Fort Douglas National Historic Landmark, Fort Douglas Military Museum, see driving and TRAX directions in entry SLC-1 below. Otherwise, continue on Foothill, which makes an S-turn and becomes 400 South Street. If walking, park anywhere in the downtown area; if driving the tour, consult individual site entries for more specific parking suggestions.

Site listings below proceed from south to north.

Entrance to the Fort Douglas Cemetery.

SLC-1. Fort Douglas National Historic Landmark and Fort Douglas Military Museum (University of Utah campus). Fort Douglas was established in 1862 by Col. Patrick Edward Connor largely as a result of Civil War tensions. Union Army troops were assigned to Utah Territory to protect the overland mail, telegraph, and emigration routes from the Confederacy, from suspected Southern sympathizers among the Mormons, and from Indian attack. The flag pole on the east end of the parade ground marked the geographical center of the 4-square-mile fort. A self-guided walking tour of the fort's historic buildings is available at http://web.utah.edu/facilities/fd/walking/Booklet.pdf. The museum offers exhibits of Fort Douglas and Utah military history. Museum hours are Tues.–Sat. noon-5 p.m. Free.

Directions: After merging onto Foothill Drive, continue to the second traffic light and turn right onto Mario Capecchi Drive. At the first traffic light, turn right onto Hempstead Road, then left onto Chase Street and right onto Potter Street. Park on the street in front of the museum.

Following your visit, return to Foothill Drive and turn west (right). Foothill makes an S-turn and becomes 400 South. Metered street parking and commercial parking lots are available throughout the downtown area; consult individual site entries for more specific parking suggestions.

Fort Douglas also is easily accessible from downtown via TRAX. Purchase a ticket from the vending machine at any downtown TRAX platform (Fort Douglas is outside of the free fare zone) and catch an eastbound University train. Exit the train at the Fort Douglas platform and walk north to cross the Eccles Bridge over Mario Capecchi Drive. A short walk across the historic parade grounds will take you to the museum.

Salt Lake City and County Building.

SLC-2. Emigration Square/ Washington Square Pioneer Campground (400 South Street and State Street). For several years, emigrants on their way to California corralled their cattle and camped here during their stay in Salt Lake City. Later, the livestock pens were moved outside of the city. The 1894 City and County Building occupies the site today, and a monument commemorating the Mormon pioneers is located at the northwest corner of the square. (The monument is erroneous in stating that the vanguard Mormon pioneers camped at this location — see entry SLC-3.)

Curbside parking is available on the streets bordering Washington Square. A commercial parking lot is located at 400 South and State Street, and an underground parking garage (accessible only from eastbound 400 South) is located at the city library east of Washington Square.

SLC-3. National Historic Trails Office (southwest corner of the 300 South/Broadway and State Street intersection). Stop by this office of the National Park Service for trail brochures, Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guides, NPS Passport Cancellation Stamps, and information about Utah's national parks.

The historic trails office is in Suite 200 on the second floor to the left of the elevator. Metered curbside parking is available on 300 South/ Broadway. A commercial parking garage on the south side of the building is accessible from southbound State Street. Open weekdays 8 a.m.–4:00 p.m.; closed 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. and holidays.

The 1847 vanguard pioneer company camped on the banks of City Creek, southwest of the trails office building near what is now Exchange Place, the nights of July 23-25, 1847. The area is

now occupied by buildings and the creek is channeled through an underground conduit.

From the trails office, walk east across State Street and then cross to the north side of 300 South/Broadway. Walk east on 300 South/ Broadway about 150 feet. A sidewalk monument describes how the first company of Latter-day Saints set to work digging irrigation ditches and planting crops at that location within hours of arriving in the Salt Lake Valley.

Now go west to Main Street. To ride TRAX in the free-fare zone directly to sites on South Temple Street (SLC-6 through 13), board any northbound train at the 300 South and Main Street platform. Otherwise, walk or drive north on Main Street for about 1 ½ blocks to stop SLC-5. Main Street has limited curbside parking.

SLC-5. Pony Express Station Monument (east side of Main Street between 200 South and 100 South). A curbside monument in front of the First National Bank Building at 163 South Main Street commemorates the Great Salt Lake City Pony Express Station. A plaque, located near the entrance of the Tribune Building a few doors north of the monument, lists Utah Pony Express riders and superintendents. The Tribune Building stands at the former site of Salt Lake House, a historic hotel where many notable travelers, including Mark Twain and Sir Richard Burton, stayed while visiting Salt Lake City on their way to California. Because the daughter of a Pony Express rider stated that her father had slept at Salt Lake House, the hotel long was assumed to have been a Pony Express home station. However, recent research has determined that the mail station originally was directly across the street from the hotel. After several months of use, the station was relocated a block north.

Pony Express Monument at 163 South Main Street.

Continue north along Main Street to South Temple Street. If riding TRAX to the Brigham Young Monument and sites to the east (SLC-6 through 10), exit the train at the City Center platform and walk north to South Temple. Consult individual entries below for further directions. If riding TRAX to the Salt Lake Temple and sites to the west (SLC-11 through 13), continue one more stop to the Temple Square platform.

Entries SLC-6 through SLC-13 are Mormon church-owned properties, part of greater Temple Square and the historic heart of Salt Lake City.

Brigham Young at Temple Square.

SLC-6. Brigham Young Monument (South Temple and Main Street) features a heroic-sized statue of Young created for the 1893 Worlds Fair in Chicago, along with smaller sculptures representing the Utah Indians and fur trappers who preceded the pioneers. A plaque on the monument lists the members of the original Mormon advance company. Curbside parking is limited in this area; underground parking may be available at the Joseph Smith Memorial Building, the white building to the right of the monument.

Turn right and go east 1 block. If driving, park in the vicinity of the intersection of South Temple and State Street.

SLC-7. The Beehive House and the Lion House (South Temple Street, west of State Street) were the residences of Brigham Young's large family. The Beehive House, named for the beehive structure on its roof, was built in 1854. For several years it served as Utah Territory's executive mansion, where Gov. Young worked and received visitors such as Ulysses S. Grant, Horace Greeley,

Beehive and Lion House at Temple Square.

Mark Twain, and Sir Richard Burton. The Beehive House is open for free, missionary-led tours Mon.–Sat. 9 a.m.–9 p.m. The Lion House, named for the stone lions at the front entrance, was built next door in 1856. It was Young's family residence and is where he died in 1877. Only its lower level, occupied by The Lion House Pantry restaurant, is open to the public.

Some California-bound emigrants passing through Salt Lake City made a point of driving past Young's residences, hoping to satisfy their curiosity about the legendary Mormon leader.

SLC-8. The Eagle Gate (South Temple and State Street) spans State Street east of Beehive House. The monumental gateway was originally erected in 1859 at the entrance to Brigham Young's private family compound. Today a bronze eagle perches atop the gateway. The original wooden eagle is exhibited at the nearby Pioneer Memorial Museum (see entry SLC-14).

Eagle Gate spans State Street at South Temple Street.

Cross to the east side of State Street. Near the corner at the foot of the Eagle Gate is a plaque that recounts the history of the gate. A nearby small monument commemorates a private schoolhouse Brigham Young built there for his many children. Now continue north on State Street, passing under the Eagle Gate. Turn east (right) at the next street, 1st Avenue. Go about 3/4 block and park curbside. On the right, a red sandstone retaining wall with a wrought-iron fence identifies the Brigham Young Cemetery.

Brigham Young, Mormon Pioneer Memorial.

SLC-9. Brigham Young Cemetery (150 East on the south side of 1st Avenue) is a place of reverence and contemplation for Mormon visitors. In the outer garden stand sculptures of Mormon emigrants and monuments commemorating pioneers William Clayton and Eliza Rocxy Snow. Clayton wrote a detailed traveler's guide to the Mormon Trail and composed the motivational hymn Come, Come, Ye Saints during his own 1846-47 trek from Nauvoo. Snow was a wife of church founder Joseph Smith and, after his death, of Brigham Young. She became a poet and songwriter of renown among the Mormon pioneers. Her grave, in the inner garden, is near that of Brigham Young and other members of his family.

Return to State Street and walk north to the park entrance at 2nd Avenue.

Brigham Young Historic Park.

SLC-10 Brigham Young Historic Park (State Street and 2nd Avenue) once was part of Brigham Young's family farm. Today it includes a water wheel with a wooden flume and lifelike sculptures of pioneers at work and play. Free evening lectures and concerts are offered here June through August.

If continuing on foot, exit the park at 2nd Avenue and walk west on North Temple Street for two blocks. Cross West Temple and turn south to the entrance of the Church History Museum. If driving, go north on State Street and turn left (west) on North Temple. The commercial parking lot at the corner of North Temple and West Temple is accessible only from the southbound lanes of West Temple,

so continue to the next street, 200 West. Turn north (right) and go around the block to the lot entrance. Park and walk across North Temple Street to the Church History Museum.

If riding TRAX along South Temple Street, exit the train at the Temple Square platform and cross to the north side of the street. To visit site SLC-11, turn west (left), cross West Temple Street, and turn right. The Church History Museum is on the left near the end of the block. To go directly to the Salt Lake Temple and related sites, walk east to the north gate of Temple Square and skip to entry SLC-13.

LDS Church History Museum.

SLC-11. The Church History Museum (45 North and West Temple Street) exhibits many important artifacts associated with the Mormon exodus to Utah, including objects related to the assassination of church founder Joseph Smith at Carthage, Ill.; Joseph Smith's death mask; a wagon with an odometer invented by Mormon pioneers during the 1847 trek west; a cannon hauled west from Nauvoo by the advance company; and many personal belongings carried to Utah by the emigrants. Original paintings and artwork depict historical events and experiences. Free. Open Mon.–Fri. 9 a.m.–9 p.m.; Sat.–Sun. and most holidays 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Closed New Year's Day, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas.

SLC-12. Deuel Pioneer Log Cabin (next to the Church History Museum) is an original pioneer home that was built in 1847 at a cost of $60. Only one other Salt Lake home built that year still exists; it is located at This is the Place Heritage Park. Lumber was

Duel Pioneer Log Cabin.

scarce in the largely treeless valley, and most homes built after 1847 were constructed of adobe brick. Free. The cabin is located between the museum and the Family History Library.

Following your visit, cross West Temple at the midblock crosswalk in front of the Family History Library and enter the west gate of Temple Square. Guides greet visitors at the gates and can provide directions to the nearest visitor center and other places of interest at Temple Square.

One of several walkways through the Temple Square gardens.

SLC-13. Temple Square (between South Temple and North Temple Streets) includes an extensive, enclosed formal garden area where the Salt Lake Temple and famous Mormon Tabernacle are located. Many passing emigrants, curious to hear Brigham Young speak, attended open-air Mormon church services here and described the construction of the temple and tabernacle in their journals. All are welcome to visit the square, but entrance to the temple itself is restricted.

Directions: Gateways to the enclosed square are on North Temple Street, Main Street, and South Temple Street. Admission is free. Open daily 9 a.m.–9 p.m.

For information about buildings, monuments, gardens, and other features within the enclosed portion of Temple Square, go to www.lds.org. Click on "About the Church" and then on "Places to Visit." Maps and brochures are also available at on-site visitor centers.

The Pioneer Memorial Museum is located two long blocks uphill from Temple Square. Exit the north gate of Temple Square and go north on Main Street toward a large, cream-colored building — the museum — at the top of the hill. At a 5-way intersection in

front of the museum, Main Street splits. Follow the right branch and turn left into a parking lot at the rear of the museum.

Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Pioneer Memorial Museum.

SLC-14. Pioneer Memorial Museum (300 North Street and Main Street) is operated by the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, which proudly proclaims it as "the world's largest collection of artifacts on one particular subject." The claim is easy to believe: this museum is packed with thousands of objects both mundane and fascinating, all part of Mormon history. Allow at least a couple hours to visit. Objects of particular note include an Army supply wagon captured from Albert Sidney Johnston's troops by the Mormon militia during the 1857 Utah War; and three feathers from the "Miracle of the Quail," when a flock of quail fluttered into an encampment of starving Mormon refugees on the Mississippi River in 1846. Donations accepted. Open Mon.–Sat. 9 a.m.–5 p.m. In June–Aug., also open Sun. 1 p.m.–5 p.m.

Upon leaving the museum, walk out to the sidewalk and look north up Main Street for a view of Ensign Peak, the last stop on the Salt Lake City Pioneer Tour.

Valley overlooks are located at the foot of Ensign Peak, where visitors can enter a maintained trail that winds 0.86 mile to the summit at 5,400 feet elevation. Due to its distance from the museum, driving to the overlooks and trailhead is recommended. **Directions:** To do so, turn south (right) from the museum parking lot.

On a clear day Ensign Peak offers a spectacular view of the city and Salt Lake Valley.

At the traffic light, turn east (left) on 300 North Street. Follow the road as it curves left around the east side of the state capitol and becomes East Capitol Boulevard. Where the road forks, stay left and continue up the hill on East Capitol. Turn west (left) at Ensign Vista Drive The trailhead is on the north side of the street west of Chartwell Drive. On the south side of the street across from the trailhead is Ensign Park Memorial Garden, where non-hikers can enjoy a magnificent view of the valley.

Ensign Peak Nature Park.

SLC-15. Ensign Peak Memorial Garden and Ensign Peak Nature Park (Ensign Vista Drive). Two days after arriving in the valley, Brigham Young and 7 other pioneers climbed this hill to view the valley and begin planning their new city. Today the hilltop provides a stunning view straight down State Street, across the city the pioneers planned, to the south end of the Salt Lake Valley. Ensign Peak Memorial Garden trailhead includes plaques that explain the history and significance of the site. Another overlook is an easy walk about 0.3 mile up the trail at 5,060 feet elevation; an interpretive sign there identifies major landmarks and key buildings across the valley. Continue up the trail to the top of the peak for the best view. The sight is particularly beautiful at dusk as the sun sets and city streets begin to sparkle with lights. Allow at least an hour for a leisurely hike, and carry water.

This is the end of the Salt Lake City Pioneer Tour. Options from here are:

To follow interstate highway along the designated Auto Tour Route for the California and Pony Express National Historic Trails to Nevada, return to downtown. Turn west (right) on 500 South Street and follow signs to westbound I-80. Skip to ***Auto Tour Segment B Salt Lake City To West Wendover, NV*** *on page 90.*

To follow the designated Auto Tour Route for the Salt Lake Cutoff and join the California Trail at City of Rocks in Idaho, return to downtown. Turn west (right) on 500 South Street and follow signs to northbound I-15. Consult ***Auto Tour Segment C*** *on page 105.*

To follow the original Pony Express Trail route along mostly unpaved roads from Salt Lake City to the Nevada border, return to downtown. Either turn west (right) on 500 South Street and follow signs to southbound I-15; OR drive south down State Street. Consult ***Auto Tour Segment D: Pony Express Byway*** *on page 110.*

AUTO TOUR SEGMENT B: Salt Lake City To West Wendover, NV— (Hastings Cutoff Of The California Trail)

Auto Tour Segment B follows the designated Auto Tour Route for the California and Pony Express National Historic Trails along I-80 from Salt Lake City to the Nevada state line between Wendover, Utah, and West Wendover, Nevada.

The Hastings Cutoff intersects I-80 three times between Salt Lake City and Wendover; otherwise, highway and trail generally are 10 to 20 miles apart. This tour offer opportunities to leave the freeway and visit trail-related sites along local roads. (One recommended stop, the Donner-Reed Museum at Grantsville, requires visitors to call ahead: see entry B-3 for details.) Also described is a 46-mile backcountry detour on mostly unpaved roads along the original route of the Hastings Cutoff (see *Optional Backcountry Route: Skull Valley and Hastings Pass*).

The Pony Express Trail lies some 50 miles south of the freeway. There are no Pony Express stops along I-80, but from the freeway at West Wendover, Nev., Pony Express visitors can turn south onto U.S.-93A and follow Nevada highways along the route. It is about 25 miles from here to McGill, Nevada where fuel can be purchased. (Consult the Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide Across Nevada for directions.) To follow the historic trail itself along unpaved roads through Utah, go to *Auto Tour Segment D: Pony Express Byway*.

Begin the Hastings Cutoff tour on westbound I-80 at Salt Lake City. The Hastings Cutoff corridor lies mostly south of the freeway, hugging higher ground at the foot of the mountains in order to avoid mud flats and marshes nearer the lake's edge.

From Exit 104 visitors can leave the freeway and access the Great Salt Lake at the state marina (nominal admission charged), which has picnic facilities and restrooms. Alternatively, a free roadside viewing area is just ahead. Approaching milepost 102, note the large

rock near the lakeshore on the right. This is Black Rock, a minor landmark along the emigrant trail.

In the distance to the upper right of this scene is the "black rock" described by Reed.

B-1. Great Salt Lake Viewing Area (I-80 west of Salt Lake City). From this roadside turnout, look across the lake to the west (left) to see Stansbury Island. Black Rock is near the edge of the lake to the far right. Some researchers believe this is the "black rock" where James Reed overtook Lansford Hastings. A historical marker tells about the trail and a marker commemorates mountain man and explorer Jedediah Smith. This is a viewing area only; there is no authorized lake access here.
Directions: Blue highway signs denote this turnout at I-80 milepost 101, about 17 miles west of Salt Lake City.

Continue west. As you approach Exit 99 (Stansbury Park) just ahead, you face a choice:

To continue west along the interstate, skip to entry B-4. Consider refueling at Exit 99, however; other opportunities to purchase fuel or food between here and Wendover are at Grantsville and Delle.

OR,

To leave the freeway and visit sites along the original trail and the Donner-Reed Museum at Grantsville, take Exit 99 to westbound UT-36 and set your odometer as you cross over the freeway.

Driving west along UT-36, note how the landscape has changed over the past 160 years. Dry land in this area was wet and marshy during the trails era, forcing wagons along higher ground ahead to the left. At about odometer reading 2.0, observe the rock outcrop on the left. This minor landmark is Adobe Rock, so called because

an adobe building stood nearby during the emigration period. Some researchers believe this is the "black rock" where James Reed caught up with Lansford Hastings and persuaded him to ride back to point out a wagon route through the Wasatch Mountains.

At the traffic light, about mile 3.0, turn right onto UT-138 and follow signs to Ezra T. Benson Grist Mill.

Benson's Grist Mill and some of the outbuildings on the property.

B-2. Ezra T. Benson Grist Mill (325 Hwy 138, Stansbury Park, UT), built by Mormon settlers in 1854, received occasional mention in the journals of passing emigrants. Today it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition to the original gristmill, the site includes a sawmill, a newly constructed operating gristmill, a country story, several historic cabins and barns, a blacksmith shop, and picnic facilities. Open May 1–Nov. 1, Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free.

Directions: After turning right onto UT-138, turn right again at the next street - about one-half mile ahead. Park on the left in front of the mill park.

From Ezra T. Benson Grist Mill, either return to westbound I-80 and skip to options 1 and 2 on pages 92 & 106; or, to follow the Hastings Cutoff of the California Trail more closely, turn west (right) on UT-138 and continue 10 miles to Grantsville.

Donner-Reed Museum open by appointment only.

B-3. The Donner-Reed Museum (90 N. Cooley Street, Grantsville, UT) displays items left by emigrants — possibly including the Donner-Reed Party — along the

Hastings Cutoff across the Great Salt Lake Desert. This is an eclectic "Grandma's attic" of relics, including ox yokes and wagon parts, American Indian artifacts, fossils, pioneer household items, photos, and even the foot of an Egyptian mummy. Outside are interpretive wayside exhibits and a commemorative monument, wagon and equipment exhibits, an 1853 cabin, and an unusual cage-like jail that dates to 1863. This Daughters of the Utah Pioneers museum is open by appointment only. To arrange a visit, call ahead at (435) 884-3767 or (435) 884-3411. Donations accepted.

Directions: Enter Grantsville on UT-138/Main Street and turn north (right) on Cooley Street, near the west end of town. A brown highway sign denotes the turn. Drive 1 block. The Donner-Reed Museum is a white 1861 adobe schoolhouse on the left.

Return to UT-138/Main Street and turn west (right).

Upon leaving Grantsville, look out across the open fields to the right. Emigrants on the Hastings Cutoff knew this area as Twenty Wells, named for the abundant freshwater springs that occurred here. Nearby Willow Creek also provided fresh water, and the grass grew thickly, making it an ideal rest stop for travelers and livestock on the Hastings Cutoff. A member of one of the lead 1846 wagon parties escorted by Hastings was buried in this vicinity. The Donner-Reed Party buried one of its members, a young man who died of tuberculosis, beside the first grave. The double gravesite has never been definitively identified, though some evidence suggests it may have been destroyed during road construction decades ago. White fiberglass posts mark parallel wagon swales in the distant fields.

Follow UT-138 as it curves sharply to the right across the mud flats and toward the freeway. Enter westbound I-80. Back at the curve, the wagon trail continues northwest, keeping to high ground along the foot of the Stansbury Mountains. Trail and freeway briefly merge again 5 miles ahead at Timpie Point, where the Stansbury range dips its toe into the muddy margin of the Great Salt Lake. Here, where freeway traffic now whizzes past at speeds that would defy 19th century imaginations, plodding oxen once towed wagons along at about two miles per hour.

West of Timpie Point is Skull Valley, a vast mud flat that is part of the Goshute Indian homeland. To avoid the mud, wagons rounded Timpie Point and went south for about 15 miles along the western skirts of the Stansbury Mountains.

To explore the Hastings Cutoff of the California Trail through Skull Valley and over Hastings Pass, prepare to leave I-80 at Exit 77. This route follows paved highway to several trails sites on the way to Iosepa and from there continues on graded backcountry roads. Consult the ***Optional Backcountry Route: Skull Valley and Hastings Pass,*** *on the next page, for further directions.*

OR,

To continue the auto tour along I-80, skip to entry B-4 on page 97.

Emigrant Party On The Road To California - 1850. *Courtesy of the Library of Congress.*

OPTIONAL BACKCOUNTRY ROUTE: Skull Valley and Hastings Pass

This 46-mile backcountry route follows pavement south along the trail corridor for about 17 miles to Iosepa. Beyond Iosepa, the route follows 29 miles of unpaved road, normally passable when dry for high-clearance 2-wheel-drive vehicles, along the original route of the Hastings Cutoff through the Cedar Mountains at Hastings Pass. The backcountry route rejoins I-80 at Aragonite (Exit 56). If continuing on unpaved roads, carry a fully inflated spare tire in good condition. There is no opportunity to buy gas, water, or food along the way, and most of the route is out of cell phone range. Consider traveling with a second vehicle in case of breakdown. This is open range country: watch for livestock and wildlife along the highways and back roads.

Skull Valley southwest of the Great Salt Lake.

Call the BLM Salt Lake Field Office at (801) 977-4300 to inquire about conditions on the unpaved roads beyond Iosepa.

Directions: Take Exit 77 to begin the optional backcountry tour from I-80. Zero your trip odometer at the stop sign at the end of the exit ramp and turn south (left) onto UT-196, following the directional sign for the California Trail. Now the Stansbury Mountains and the Hastings Cutoff trail are to the left; the Cedar Mountains and Hastings Pass are across Skull Valley to the right.

As you start your drive south, look left toward Timpie Point. A few willows show the location of Big Springs, a source of brackish water that was used by some travelers along the Hastings Cutoff. Many emigrants, though, bypassed Big Springs and headed directly to Horseshoe Springs or Hope Wells. The trail runs along the higher ground to the left, but crosses to the right side of the highway about 4 miles south of Big Springs.

BLM's Wildlife Management Area at Horseshoe Springs in Skull Valley once provided the pioneers with a place to stop and refresh.

Horseshoe Springs and other waterholes along the margins of Skull Valley were important resources for the Goshute Indians long before the arrival of emigrants. Wildlife and trail ruts are abundant around the springs today, and interpretive wayside exhibits are in development. The Bureau of Land Management manages this area for protection of wildlife and wetlands. Please keep vehicles on designated roads.

Directions: At odometer reading 9.6 miles (south of milepost 28) is a sign for Horseshoe Springs. Turn right onto the gravel entrance road. Just ahead, look to the left for a white fiberglass trail post marking wagon swale. Nearby, a brown T-shaped marker made of railroad rail provides an emigrant's observations concerning a fork in the trail there. Pause here to explore wagon swales on both sides of the road; then continue to parking at the springs.

Return to UT-196 and turn south (right). Zero your trip odometer upon re-entering the highway. The main trail corridor continues along the right side of UT-196.

Also of Interest: **Iosepa Polynesian Settlement.** The ghost town of Iosepa (1889-1917) post-dates the emigrant trail by 20 years but is a fascinating part of Utah history. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints established this settlement for Polynesian converts from Hawaii, Samoa, Tahiti, and New Zealand who wished to immigrate to Utah to be near the Mormon temple at Salt Lake City. A historical marker tells the story. A small cemetery remains. The site has a picnic pavilion and restrooms (closed winters). Each Memorial Day weekend, the Iosepa Historical Association sponsors a luau there for Utah Polynesians and others who are interested in Polynesian history. Visitors are welcome.

Directions: On the left side of the highway at highway milepost 23, about 4.5 miles south of Horseshoe Springs, is a blue directional

sign on the left for Iosepa. Turn left onto the entrance drive, crossover the cattle guard, and following the road to the right for about a mile to the picnic pavilion.

Return to UT-196 heading south.

On private land south of Iosepa is Hope Wells, where the Donner-Reed Party discovered the shredded remains of a note left by Lansford Hastings. "2 days – 2 nights – hard driving – cross – desert – reach water," the beleaguered emigrants read. One more brackish waterhole, Redlum Spring, lies ahead; from there the trail continues west 65 miles through the Cedar Mountains and across the salt flats to Donner Springs, at the foot of Pilot Peak.

Travelers unequipped for off-pavement backcountry travel now should turn around and resume the tour along I-80 to stop B-4.

Directions: From Hope Wells the Hastings Cutoff turns northwest, but today's backcountry traveler continues south on UT-196. At highway milepost 20, about 7.5 miles south of Horseshoe Springs, watch for a brown sign for 8-Mile Spring and Rydahl Canyon. There, turn right, reset your trip odometer, and cross a cattle guard onto a gravel road. Proceed only if the road is dry. (Be aware that odometer mileage readings may vary slightly from one vehicle to another.

Drive due west 1.3 miles to a road junction. Stay on the main road as it angles about 45 degrees to the right — do not continue straight toward the Cedar Mountains. Continue along the main road, disregarding minor offshoot roads.

At odometer reading 2.8 miles is a cattle guard and a Bureau of Land Management entrance sign with advisories concerning the Cedar Mountains area. About another one and three-quarters of a mile ahead the road veers left across a drainage, angles northwestward again, and approaches some white clay mounds on the right. There the road forks. Bear right, leaving the gravel road and entering a secondary bladed clay road that passes northwest around the clay mounds. Often the road here is moist at the junction

but dry beyond the mounds. **Do not proceed** *if the road beyond the mounds is wet.*

From here the Hastings Cutoff lies about 2.5 miles to the northwest, making a beeline toward Hastings Pass.

Continue northwest to a 4-way intersection at odometer mile 11.3. Turn north (right). The road next makes several broad, sweeping curves over the next 1.5 mile stretch, gradually converging with the Hastings Cutoff trail. The wagon trail and the road intersect at odometer reading 12.7 miles. Stop near a white fiberglass trail post on the right and get out to explore the ruts on foot. Do not drive on the ruts.

Follow the trail ruts on foot to the right for a short distance and stand facing east toward the Stansbury Mountains. At the north (left) end of the range lies Timpie Point, where this tour segment began. Between here and there stretches a 10-mile expanse of impassable wetlands and mud flats — the light-colored, barren ground in the middle distance. Look back down the trail swales to the southeast to see where the wagons finally started across Skull Valley. Then turn around and look up the trail to the northwest, toward the Cedar Mountains. Hastings Pass is at the lowest point in the range ahead.

Today, Redlum spring is used heavily by grazing livestock and has little water during the summer months.

Now the road merges with the trail. About a mile ahead the road curves sharply west (left), narrows to one lane, and enters a dry wash. At this location, the wagon trail crosses the wash: look for a white fiberglass trail post on the opposite bank. After a mile the road leaves the wash and comes to a junction. On private land in this vicinity is Redlum Spring. It was briny and, some emigrants believed, unsuitable for livestock, but it was the last water on the Hastings Cutoff for nearly 65 miles.

Zero your trip odometer at the road junction and turn north (right). Now the trail is on the right side of the modern road. Look on the right for a white fiberglass post marking its passage.

At odometer mile 0.7, a white fiberglass trail post on the right marks wagon ruts near the road. At mile 1.5, stop and look ahead to the left. In the distant sagebrush, a series of white fiberglass posts shows the trail route turning northwest past a large outcrop of basalt. The modern road continues northeast to a three-way intersection about one and a half miles further. A Bureau of Land Management sign for the Cedar Mountain Wilderness Area stands at the junction. Turn left (northwest) and begin the climb toward Hastings Pass.

About a mile ahead, the road enters a ravine through a burned area bristling with dead junipers. Here the wagon trail merges briefly with the road. The ravine grows deeper and narrower, increasingly difficult terrain for wagons. On the left at odometer mile 4.9, trail ruts (marked with a white fiberglass post) leave the roadway and climb a steep hogsback ridge to Hastings Pass. Do not park here, but pause to drop off any hikers who wish to follow the wagon ruts up to the pass. From the pass hikers can walk down a spur-road that leads back to the main road. The hike is about 0.8 mile. Meanwhile, drivers continue ahead for a half-mile to the spur road on the left. Follow the spur road up the first rise to the south and park at the exhibit turnout to await the hikers. Driving the spur road to the trail marker is not recommended, as the road is steep and rocky, and there is almost no room to turn around.

An historical marker identifies the summit of Hastings Pass — a short walk from the pullout parking area.

The summit of Hastings Pass, on top of the ridge, is marked by a brown *T-rail post*. From this height emigrants could look back across Skull Valley, but the view to the west is blocked by nearby hills. Once here on top of the hogsback, wagons turned sharply to the right and then descended a rough "dugway" or road cut,

still visible, into the deep wash on the left. They followed the wash back down to the main canyon. Hikers can follow the trail down to the main road and turn right to meet their vehicle back at roadside turnout, or they can descend via the gravel spur-road.

Dugout made by pioneers to begin the descent on the west side of Hastings Pass

From the pullout, continue west. Just ahead, at a hairpin turn in the road (odometer 5.5 miles), look left to see the ravine where the wagon trail down from Hastings Pass re-enters the roadway. Two miles farther, road and trail emerge from the Cedar Mountains and travelers get their first look at the bleak expanse ahead. Pull over to take in the view. Imagine the dismay and dread emigrants felt, their thirsty oxen already bellowing for water, as they gazed out across the shining desert. Pilot Peak, rising on the opposite side of the salt flats, shimmers pale blue on the northwestern horizon. Next water, Donner Springs, lies at its foot.

Watch for traces of the trail, typically on the right side of the drive as you descend the Hastings Pass area.

As the modern road descends to the flats, watch on the right and the left for white fiberglass posts that mark the trail. The gravel road continues straight ahead past an industrial incinerator and intersects paved road at odometer mile 9.9. Turn north (right), leaving the wagon trail, and drive 2.3 miles. Enter westbound I-80 and consult entry B-4.

B-4. Grassy Mountain Rest Area (I-80 milepost 55) offers views of the Cedar Mountains to the southeast and the Grayback Hills to the northwest. On clear days Pilot Peak is visible, as well. Look back toward Hastings Pass, about 4.25 miles southeast of the rest area. The trail crosses I-80 about a mile west of here and crawls over the steep saddle of the Grayback Hills. An orientation panel at the rest area shows the location of the California and Pony Express Trails relative to the highway.

Directions: Enter the rest area west of Exit 56.

West of the rest area an Auto Tour Route highway sign marks where the Hasting Cutoff crosses the freeway on the approach to the Grayback Hills, which are ahead and slightly to the right. Beyond the hills, the trail is about 6 miles north of I-80, where the sun glares off the white salt crust and daytime temperatures can exceed 100 degrees. Some years, out on the salt flats, emigrant wagons bogged down in the mucky clay and salt beds. James Reed's (Donner-Reed Wagon Train) thirst-crazed oxen bolted into the desert and emigrants miserably stumbled along, desperate to reach water.

On the right at about milepost 22 stands the distinctive hooked peak of Floating Island, so named because atmospheric conditions often make it appear to float on hot air above the flats. The Hastings Cutoff crosses north of Floating Island and continues across the next basin toward Silver Island peak. From the Tree of Life sculpture along the freeway, the trail lies about 11 miles to the north.

B-5. Salt Flats Rest Area (I-80 milepost 10) has another trails orientation map and information about the nearby Bonneville Salt Flats. Visitors can walk out onto the flats from this rest area.

Directions: Enter the rest area at about milepost 10.

Approaching the Nevada border, visitors can leave the freeway at the Bonneville Speedway exit, drive onto the salt flats, and take a side-trip on bladed roads to Donner Springs.

Salt flats of the Great Salt Lake Desert border both sides of I-80.

B-6. Bonneville Salt Flats Recreation Area (I-80 mile 4). Here visitors can drive onto the salt flats when the ground is dry. At the access, the Bureau of Land Management plans to install a kiosk with interpretive exhibits about the historic trail, the natural history of the flats, and the famous speedway.

Directions: Leave I-80 at Exit 4 for the Bonneville Salt Flats International Speedway. (A service station and a small café are located off this exit.) At the end of the exit ramp, reset your trip odometer and turn north (right) onto the paved Pilot Peak Road. Past a sign for the Bonneville Salt Flats Recreation Area, at odometer reading 1.3 miles, the road forks: bear right (east) and continue to the turnaround area at odometer mile 5.2. Before venturing onto the flats, test the ground to make sure it is dry beneath the salt crust. Do not enter the flats when they are moist and avoid areas that appear dark in color, or your vehicle may mire to its axles just as some pioneer wagons did.

To visit Donner Springs, see entry B-7. The historic springs are about 23 miles from the salt flats recreation area, and nearly 17 miles of the distance is unpaved. Under dry conditions, the road is passable to 2-wheel drive passenger vehicles, though it may be washboard in places.

To skip that side-trip and continue to the Nevada border, return to westbound I-80 and drive on to West Wendover. Consult the Auto Tour Route Guide Across Nevada for further directions.

B-7. Donner Springs (north of Wendover, UT) was the first water encountered by travelers on the Hastings Cutoff beyond Redlum Springs. (Other water sources are available onward to the southwest.) The site, located on a working ranch, is open to visitors by permission

Donner Springs and several other area springs are fed from rain and snowmelt from Pilot Peak Range.

of the landowners. Please stay on designated roads, respect the owners' privacy, and do not disturb livestock. There is no restroom at Donner Springs.

Directions: From the salt flats recreation area, return 3.9 miles to the main road and reset your trip odometer at the junction. Turn right onto Leppy Pass Road (a sign denotes the TLBar ranch about 23 miles ahead) and follow it northwestward. At odometer mile 0.7, the road forks. Stay on the paved road, which curves to the left. Pilot Peak is visible ahead and slightly to the left. At odometer mile 3.1, there is a concrete building to the left.

At odometer mile 6.5, the road crosses the Nevada state line (marked by a fence) and becomes gravel. Drive slowly on any washboard areas to avoid losing traction. At odometer mile 12.6 is a California Trail and Hastings Cutoff sign. An interpretive wayside exhibit with information about Bidwell Pass is on the left. Be aware of possible tire hazards if you are going to park on the road shoulder. North of the exhibit area and on the left, a white fiberglass trail post shows where the historic trail crosses from the right on its way toward Bidwell Pass.

Continue along the main road, which gradually curves to the northeast and re-enters Utah. A sign denoting the historic Munsee Cabin is on the right at about odometer reading 20.2, and a sign for Box Elder County is at mile 21.

As you approach the ranch entrance, look for an orchard on the right and another gravel road branching off to the left. The ranch entrance is just ahead at odometer mile 22.5. Turn right into the TL Bar Ranch and drive past the cattle pens. Continue slowly through the equipment yard past a fence made of road signs and bear to the

right until you are heading south. The road passes through a gate and comes to a T-intersection, with the right branch going to a cabin up the hill and the left branch going downhill toward a second cabin. Turn left toward the second log cabin. Stop at the hitching rail where a sign designates visitor parking, and walk — do not drive — to the interpretive kiosk at the spring. Enjoy the spring and interpretive facilities, and leave the site tidy.

After your visit, retrace the drive back to I-80 and drive to West Wendover, Nevada. Consult the ***Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide Across Nevada*** *for further directions.*

AUTO TOUR SEGMENT C: Salt Lake City To City Of Rocks National Reserve, ID (Salt Lake Cutoff of the California Trail)

Auto Tour Segment C follows the designated Auto Tour Route for the Salt Lake Cutoff of the California National Historic Trail from Salt Lake City to the City of Rocks National Reserve in southern Idaho. The tour route mostly follows interstate freeway, with some travel on state and local roads. Much of the trail corridor is occupied by modern highways and other developments.

Begin the tour on northbound I-15 north in Salt Lake City, Utah.

C-1. Wasatch Warm Springs Park (900 North Street 300 West Street, Salt Lake City) is the southernmost of a series of four warm and hot springs. Pioneers found the features on their second day in the Salt Lake Valley and built the first bath house there 3 years later. California-bound emigrants on the Salt Lake Cutoff enjoyed the bath, too, and many noted it in their journals. Today the spring is part of a city park, but bathing there is not permitted. Interpretive plaques at the site tell the story and also tell of American Indian use of the area.

Exhibits explain some of the natural history of the Warm Springs.

Directions: Take Exit 309 and bear right (eastbound) onto 600 North Street. Cross over the Union Pacific railroad track and drive 3 blocks. Turn north (left) onto 300 West and continue to 900 North Street. On the right is Warm Springs Park and a large, white Spanish mission-style building, a 1920s-era bath house (now closed). Park on the north side of the building and follow the paved walking path to the hot springs.

From the park, visitors can return to northbound I-15 and continue to Bountiful; or for a more leisurely drive, continue north on 300

West, which becomes Beck Street/U.S.-89. U.S.-89 becomes 500 West at Woods Cross and merges with northbound I-15 at West Bountiful.

C-2. Fort Buenaventura (2450 A Avenue, Ogden, UT) was the first permanent Euro-American settlement in the Great Basin: an 1845 trading post established at the Weber River by mountain man Miles Goodyear and his Indian wife, Pomona. Goodyear built the post as a "halfway house" for trade with emigrants to Oregon and California, but sold out to the newly arrived Mormons in 1847. The stockade and cabins have been reconstructed based on historical and archeological evidence. The 88-acre county park also has a visitor center with artifact exhibits, a canoeing pond, group camping and day-use areas, concession service, and restrooms. Trappers' Rendezvous are held on Easter and Labor Day weekends, and other events are offered during the summer. Open April– Nov.; hours vary. Nominal admission charged. Consult the park website at http://www.co.weber.ut.us/parks/fortb/ or call (801) 399-8491 for more information.

Directions: Take I-15 Exit 342 and turn east (right) on UT-53/ Pennsylvania Avenue. The road turns east and becomes 24th Street. Continue east for 0 .9 mile, about 7 blocks, and turn right on A Avenue. The park entrance is ahead on the left.

Also of Interest: **Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge (2155 West Forest Street, Brigham City, UT).** This 75,000-acre marshland refuge, where the Bear River empties into the Great Salt Lake, hosts millions of migrant and resident birds each year. Such areas were important resources for the native peoples of the Great Basin. The refuge, managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, allows today's visitors to experience the natural environment encountered by emigrants on the Salt Lake Cutoff. Facilities include a wildlife education center, a half-mile walking trail, and a 12-mile driving tour, which is open

The refuge education center provides opportunities for visitors and area school children to learn about bird migration.

dawn to dusk year-round, weather permitting. Refuge grounds are open year-round during daylight hours, weather permitting. The education center is open Mon.–Fri. 8 a.m.–5 p.m. and Sat. 10 a.m.– 4 p.m. Closed Sundays and federal holidays. Free.

Directions: Leave northbound I-15 at Exit 363. Turn left at the end of the exit ramp. The refuge is on the left, 1 block west of the freeway.

1855 Pioneer cabin stands in a Brigham City park near the historic Box Elder Tabernacle.

Also of Interest: **Brigham City, Utah.** Mormon pioneers established Brigham City in 1851, but such settlements competed with native people for water, grass, and firewood. By 1853, residents were living within an adobe fort, in the heart of today's Brigham City, for protection from the Shoshone Indians. A stone monument at 300 North and 200 West commemorates these events and an 1855 cabin stands nearby. The Salt Lake Cutoff lay west of the fort. Passing emigrants occasionally entered the settlement to purchase supplies.

Directions: From I-15, take Exit 363 and turn east (right) onto Forest Street; or from the bird refuge, turn east (right) and cross the freeway on Forest Street. The monument and a cabin are at Brigham Young Park, on the left between 300 West and 200 West. To visit historic Box Elder Tabernacle, which dates to the trails era, continue 2 blocks east to Main Street and turn south (right) to 200 South Street.

From Brigham City, there are several options for continuing the tour into Idaho:

Return to northbound I-15. *From Tremonton, near the Idaho border, take either I-15 or I-84 to I-86/I-84, which approximates the route of the Oregon Trail west across Idaho. Consult the Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide Across Idaho for further directions.*

To take a more leisurely scenic route, *visit the site of the Bear River Massacre, and join the Oregon Trail at Pocatello, take Brigham City's Main Street south to 200 South Street and turn east (left). Merge onto eastbound U.S.-89/U.S.-91 and continue north on U.S.-91 through Logan and into Idaho. At the road junction north of Preston, stay on U.S.-91 as it jogs west and then north. A roadside turnout for the Bear River Massacre site is on the right at milepost 13. Continue across the valley and up the hill to an interpretive overlook on the right at milepost 14. From there, drive north on U.S.-91 and merge onto I-15 to Pocatello. Turn west on I-86 toward American Falls and consult the Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide Across Idaho for further directions.*

To stay on the Salt Lake Cutoff, *return to northbound I-15 from Brigham City and follow directions below.*

Replica historic steam locomotives participate in the daily reinactment of the Golden Spike ceremony.

C-3. Golden Spike National Historic Site (northwest of Brigham City) figures in the very beginning of the westward emigration movement — and in its demise. The Bidwell-Bartleson Party, picking a way around the north end of the Great Salt Lake, crossed the Promontory Mountains in 1841. Theirs were the first wheeled vehicles to enter this country. Almost 3 decades later, dignitaries gathered here at Promontory Summit to pound a "golden spike" ceremoniously marking completion of the first transcontinental railroad. Travelers understandably preferred a fast, safe, and comfortable train ride instead of a dangerous and exhausting 5-month wagon trek, so the joining of the rails ushered an end to covered wagon travel over the Oregon and California Trails. Golden Spike National Historic Site has 2 operating steam engines and weekly reenactments of the Golden Spike Ceremony are performed during the summer. Also available are a visitor center, a 1.5-mile walking trail, a 14-mile driving tour, and

a 2-mile driving tour. Open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily except New Year's, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Admission is $5/vehicle in winter, $7/vehicle in summer. Limited services, including fuel and dining, are available in nearby Corinne. The park has no food concessions.

Directions: Golden Spike National Historic Site is 32 miles west of I-15. Take I-15 Exit 365 and turn west (right) on UT-13 to UT-83. Follow signs to Golden Spike National Historic Site.

At Tremonton, merge onto westbound I-84.

1) **To most closely approximate the route of the Salt Lake Cutoff,** *leave I-84 at Exit 5 west of Snowville. Turn west (left) onto UT-30 and drive 2.9 miles. A brown T-post marker with an emigrant quote about this area is on the south side of the road, and trails are visible there. Continue west on UT-30. Where the highway forks, continue west (straight ahead) onto UT-42. At the Idaho border, the highway becomes ID-91. Continue to Malta, Idaho, and consult further directions printed beneath alternative 2, below.*

2) **To stay on the officially designated Auto Tour Route,** *continue westbound on I-84 and cross into Idaho. Take Exit 245, turn west (left) onto Sublette Road, and continue to Malta.*

At Malta, turn left onto ID-81 and then right onto ID-77. At Connor, where ID-77 turns north, continue straight ahead and follow the Elba-to-Almo Highway for 16 miles to Almo. The City of Rocks National Reserve visitor center is on the south side of town, and copies of the Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide Across Idaho are available there. From the visitor center, continue south to the next intersection; turn right and follow signs to City of Rocks National Preserve. The drive through the reserve is unpaved.

After your visit, follow the unpaved road to Oakley and turn north on ID-27 to Burley. Join the auto tour for the Oregon Trail along westbound I-86 and consult the Interpretive Guide Across Idaho.

AUTO TOUR SEGMENT D: Pony Express Trail National Back Country Byway

The Pony Express Trail National Back Country Byway, designated and managed by the Bureau of Land Management, follows 123 miles of unpaved roads along the original Pony Express route in western Utah. The byway crosses remote sagebrush rangeland that is little changed since the 1860s, with interpretive stops at Pony Express station sites along the way. When dry, the roads are suitable for 2-wheel-drive vehicles. High clearance is recommended.

This byway tour, which ends in Nevada, typically takes 10 to 12 hours to complete. The route begins on I-15 at Salt Lake City, enters unpaved back roads west of Fairfield, and joins the pavement again at Ibapah, near the Utah/Nevada border. It then follows local roads to U.S.-93A (paved) in Nevada. From there, visitors can follow U.S.-93A north to West Wendover and join the auto tour for the California Trail along I-80 across Nevada, or turn south to Ely and continue along the Pony Express Trail on U.S.-50. No services are available along the road from Bluffdale, Utah, to West Wendover or Schellbourne, northeast of Ely, Nev. Start out with a full tank of gas and a fully inflated spare tire, and carry food and water. Do not enter unpaved roads when they are wet or when inclement weather threatens. Cell phone service is not available along much of this route, but the road receives moderate recreational traffic.

More information about the Pony Express Trail National Back Country Byway is available at: www.byways.org/explore/byways/68993/ and from the Bureau of Land Management at www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/salt_lake/recreation/back_country_byways/pony_express_trail.html. Telephone the Bureau's Salt Lake Field Office at (801) 977-4300 to inquire about road conditions along the byway.

The location of Trader's Rest Pony Express station is identified with a granite marker.

Begin this tour on southbound I-15 at Salt Lake City; or drive south on State Street, the original route of the Pony Express, to 12300 South Street. On the State Street route, note the granite monument commemorating the Traders Rest Pony Express Station, located near the sidewalk on the right (west side), north of 7200 South Street. At 12300 South, turn right and immediately go to the left lane to enter southbound I-15.

Also of Interest: **Ancient Lake Bonneville.** While driving south, observe the narrow terraces along the mountainsides. These are ancient shorelines of Lake Bonneville, a huge freshwater sea that sprawled across western Utah between 32,000 and 12,000 years ago. At its largest, Lake Bonneville stretched 325 miles long and 135 miles wide, and was 1,000 feet deep at the future site of Salt Lake City. But around 15,000 years ago, as the water lapped at its highest terrace, the lake breached the north edge of its basin in southern Idaho and released a catastrophic flood into the Snake River Valley. The lake level plummeted some 375 feet within days, and then remained stable for more than a thousand years while waves gradually nipped a second major terrace into the mountainsides. As the climate began warming around 12,000 years ago, increased evaporation caused Lake Bonneville to shrink further. Dissolved mineral salts from the diminishing pool became concentrated in its lowest basin, forming the Great Salt Lake. Vast expanses of mucky lake-bottom clay dried up into featureless desert and the remaining shallow, saline playas evaporated and left behind a five-foot-thick salt pan known today as the Bonneville Salt Flats. Meanwhile, four rivers continue to deposit minerals in the Great Salt Lake, which has no outlet to flush them away and so grows slowly saltier.

D-1. Rockwell's Station (14600 S Street, Bluffdale, UT) was a Pony Express contract mail station within a hotel and brewery operated by legendary Mormon frontiersman Orrin Porter Rockwell. Rockwell was widely believed to be a "Destroying Angel" and his fearsome reputation fascinated the public. Rockwell's Station is commemorated by a stone monument located near the Utah State Prison.

A large stone monument is located near the site of the former Rockwell's Station.

Directions: Leave southbound I-15 at Exit 288 near Bluffdale. At the end of the exit, turn west (right) onto 14600 South Street. Turn right at the first paved street, Pony Express Street. The monument is among the grove of trees in the small park to the left. Park at the Bluffdale free park-and-ride lot just ahead on the right and walk over to the monument. Rockwell's Station was about 160 yards west-southwest of the monument and south of 14600 South.

From here, visitors can:

Make a short detour to Lehi to visit the ***John Hutchings Museum*** *of Natural History and the Eagle Mountain Pony Express Trail segment. Museum opens at 11 a.m. Consult entries D-2 and D-3.*

OR,

Continue directly to ***Camp Floyd and the Pony Express National Back Country Byway****. From the park-and-ride lot, return to 14600 South and turn west (right). Continue west across the Union Pacific Railroad tracks and over the Jordan River. Beyond the river the road jogs north (right) and becomes South Redwood Road, and then turns west. Turn left onto Camp Williams Road/UT-68 at the traffic light. At 7.3 miles, past Camp Williams Military Reservation, turn west (right) onto UT-73. Skip to entry D-4.*

Top off your vehicle's fuel tank at either Lehi or Eagle Mountain if you plan to continue along the Pony Express National Backcountry Byway. No services are available for the next 190 miles.

D-2. John Hutchings Museum of Natural History (55 North Center Street, Lehi, UT) offers exhibits on the Pony Express, Mormon pioneers, and native peoples of the area. Featured natural history exhibits include bird eggs and minerals. Open Tue.–Sat. 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Admission $4/adults, $3/children, or $12/family. For more information go to www.hutchingsmuseum.org.

Entrance to the Hutchings Museum.

Directions: From Rockwell's Station, return to southbound I-15. Take Exit 279 (Lehi Main Street) and turn west (right) at the end of the exit ramp onto Main Street. Drive 0.7 mile to Center Street and turn right. Museum parking is on the left side of the street. A dramatic and romanticized statue of Orrin Porter Rockwell, erected by his descendants, stands on city property north of the museum.

D-3. Eagle Mountain Pony Express Trail Segment (6100 North Pony Express Parkway) offers pedestrian, biking, and equestrian trails along the original alignment of the Pony Express Trail. Visitor enhancements and interpretive wayside exhibits are scheduled to be completed in 2010-2011.

Directions: From the John Hutchings Museum of Natural History, drive west on Main Street. At the roundabout at 500 West Street, take the second exit and continue west on Main Street/UT-73 for about 8 miles to the first traffic light, located at Ranches Parkway. Turn south (left) onto Ranches Parkway. In 1.3 miles turn west (right) at the 4-way stop onto Pony Express Parkway and continue for about 2 miles as the road curves left, then right, and left again and over Unity Pass. Trailhead parking and interpretive wayside exhibits are on the right at 6100 North. A second trailhead with more interpretive wayside exhibits is located a short distance farther south at 5600 North Pony Express Parkway.

Following your visit, continue southwest on Pony Express Parkway, which curves south and becomes Sweetwater Road. Follow the road into a residential area. At the roundabout, take the first exit (first right) onto Eagle Mountain Boulevard, which gradually turns north and intersects UT-73. Turn southwest (left) onto the highway.

Fairfield's Stagecoach Inn.

D-4. Camp Floyd/Stagecoach Inn State Park (18035 W 1540 N, Fairfield, UT) is the site of an 1858 Army post established by General Albert Sydney Johnston, whose command came to Utah to quash the rumored Mormon rebellion known as the Utah War. Nearby is Stagecoach Inn, an adobe hotel that served travelers such as Mark Twain and English adventurer Sir Richard Burton. Researchers disagree on the precise location of the Pony Express station: some believe it was at the inn, with stables located a few blocks east, and others believe it stood in what is now a pasture about a block northeast of the inn. Today, the park museums house artifacts and exhibits from this historic site. Visitors also can tour nearby Camp Floyd Cemetery (ask for directions at the park) and an 1896 schoolhouse. Picnic grounds surround the historic structures; restrooms, an orientation sign for the Pony Express Trail National Back Country Byway, and markers commemorating Camp Floyd are nearby. The state park is open daily April 1–Oct. 14, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.; closed Sundays from Oct. 15–Mar. 31 and on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Nominal admission charged.

Directions: Drive west on UT-73 through Cedar Fort to Fairfield and follow signs to Camp Floyd/Stagecoach Inn State Park.

Return to UT-73 and reset your trip odometer. Turn left, drive west for 5 miles, and look for a brown Bureau of Land Management sign for the Old Pony Express Route. Turn left (southwest) there onto Faust Road. Watch for concrete Pony Express Trail markers along the left side of the road.

At odometer mile 11.1 is a turnout and stone monument for East Rush Valley Station. Today's trail historians doubt this was ever a Pony Express station. Continue southwestward past Faust, a siding on the Union Pacific track, for another 8 miles to UT-36.

D-5. Faust's Station (Faust, UT) was the first Pony Express home station, where riders ate and slept after completing their relay, west of Salt Lake City. The site, also called Rush Valley Station, is commemorated by a 1939 Civilian Conservation Corps monument, an interpretive wayside exhibit with a map of the entire trail, and a historical summary. The original location was about a mile south of the monument.

A highway pullout provides access to the interpretive exhibits at Faust Station monument.

Directions: At the UT-36 junction, cross to the west side of the highway and enter the roadside turnout. The station was about a mile south of the monument.

D-6. The Pony Express National Back Country Byway Visitor Information Site marks the beginning of the byway. Signs provide orientation and travel advisories.

The National Back Country Byway is marked by a BLM "portal" sign at either end.

Directions: From the Faust's Station turnout on UT-36, turn south. About a half-mile south is a Bureau of Land Management sign for the byway. Turn west (right) there onto a road with broken, patchy pavement. Ahead and to the left, a modern barn stands on the original site of Faust's Station. About two miles ahead, turn right onto an unpaved road leading to a byway information site on a nearby hilltop.

Return to the Back Country Byway (not UT-36) and reset your trip odometer. Turn right to continue southwestward. About 5 miles ahead the patchy pavement ends altogether and the road bends to the right and climbs over Lookout Pass in the Onaqui Mountains. A turnout for a scenic overlook is located at odometer reading 6.7 miles.

D-7. Point Lookout Station was damaged during an Indian attack in 1860, but reopened the following year. A stone monument commemorates the station. Across the road is an old homestead site where, in the mid-1860s, a brother of Orrin Porter Rockwell resided with his wife in a small cabin. Libby Rockwell, childless and lonely, kept pet dogs for company. The small enclosure marks and protects their graves. Several emigrants are thought to rest outside the enclosure, as well.

Directions: The monument is west of Lookout Pass at odometer reading 7.4 miles, on the right side of the road. The Rockwell farmstead and pet cemetery are on the left, across the road from the monument.

Continue west to the crest of the ridge and pause to view the landscape to the west. This formidable country was called, grimly, "Paiute Hell."

D-8. Simpson Springs Station is located at a reliable waterhole that was frequented by Indian desert-dwellers until the site was developed for commercial use in 1858. The stone building there is a replica built by Toole High School students in 1975. Interpretive wayside exhibits tell the story.

Simpson's Springs Pony Express station.

Directions: Continue northwestward from Point Lookout, keeping to the main road. At odometer mile 10.6, the road splits. Take the left fork to the southwest. Some 3.4 miles beyond the split, at odometer mile 14.0, another road intersects the byway.

Disregard it and continue straight (southwest) on the main road. In another two miles the road rounds a knob and turns west, and at odometer mile 20.4 the road forks again: bear left. The road makes a broad curve to the south. Simpson Springs Station is on the right at odometer reading 23.8 miles.

Upon leaving Simpson Springs, reset your trip odometer and continue southwestward along the byway. Beyond the station on the left is a 14-site public campground with picnic tables and toilets. At odometer mile 8.2 is a stone monument for Riverbed Station. However, the site was occupied by a commercial stage station built in 1861 — it never was a Pony Express property. Trail lore holds that several stage station employees abruptly quit after frightening encounters with entities they described as "desert fairies."

Dugway Station, about eight miles beyond the Riverbed monument, is at a distance from the modern road and is not a stop in this guide. Now the road passes between the Dugway Range to the north and the Thomas Range to the south and becomes steep and winding. At odometer mile 32.6, another stone monument commemorates Black Rock Station. Researchers have no information confirming this as a Pony Express station.

About 4 miles beyond the Black Rock Station monument is a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service sign for Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge, a lush wetland in thirsty country. Follow the main road as it crosses the south end of the refuge and swings north.

Gateway exhibits at Fish Springs NWR help visitors to learn about the significance of the springs.

D-9. Fish Springs Station was (and is) a remote outpost at a large oasis in the West Desert. The 10,000-acre marsh has attracted people and wildlife for more than 10,000 years. The first way-station was built there in the 1850s to accommodate commercial mail, freight, and passenger wagons traveling between

Salt Lake City and Sacramento. It later became a stop on the Central Overland Stage route and briefly served as a Pony Express home station. Today the whole area is managed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service as the Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge. The original trail-era buildings are gone, but a glass scatter and a few foundation stones reveal the location of the original station, and the area looks much the same as it did when the Pony passed through.

Directions: At odometer mile 42.4, turn right onto the entrance road to the Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge headquarters. Here at the entrance station are refuge brochures and a pay phone. Nearby, the headquarters building has drinking water and a public restroom. Continue north on the refuge road to a grove of trees about a half-mile past headquarters. A kiosk there provides some informational displays. Walk across the road and look for a silver-colored Pony Express marker post, which shows the site location about 20 feet west of the road. Please do not collect mementos or otherwise disturb the site.

Return to the Back Country Byway, reset your trip odometer, and turn west (right). At odometer mile 0.8, a stone monument commemorates Fish Springs Pony Express Station. The station site is visible in the distance from the monument. Continue along the main road as it leaves the refuge and bends around the north end of the Fish Springs Range.

D-10. Boyd's Station (also called Butte Station) boasts the best-preserved Pony Express ruins in Utah. Owner and station-keeper William "Bid" Boyd enjoyed his solitude so much that he continued to reside here until the early 1900s. The stabilized ruins of a stone building remain, and wayside exhibits tell the story.

Interpretive exhibits provide information about the pony express and the experiences of the riders and station keepers.

Directions: The road forks 13.9 miles beyond the Fish Springs National Wildlife

Refuge headquarters. Bear right. Boyd Station ruins are on the right just beyond the fork, at odometer reading 14.0 miles.

From the Boyd Station turnout, return to the right fork of the road and continue along the byway for about 9 miles to Callao (no services). The road makes several jogs through the community. Beyond the school at odometer mile 23.7, the road reaches an intersection. Turn northwest (right), staying on the main road. A stone monument commemorating Willow Springs Station stands at a ranch entrance at odometer reading 24.0 miles. Adjacent land is private property; please do not trespass.

At the monument, the road curves sharply to the left. At odometer mile 24.6, the road forks: bear right, following the signs northwest toward Gold Hill and Ibapah. At odometer mile 28.7, a road enters from the left and a large handmade mailbox sits on a stone pedestal at the intersection. Turn west (left) onto that road. About a mile ahead, follow the road as it curves to the right, as the left fork is a ranch entrance. About 8 miles ahead is Overland Canyon, an ominous, narrow defile where an Overland Stage employee and four soldiers died in an Indian attack in July 1863.

The Round, or Canyon Station, also had gun ports allowing the station keepers some degree of defense.

D-11. Canyon Station, consisting of a simple dugout and corral, was built at the mouth (northwest end) of Overland Canyon in 1861 to serve the Pony Express and Central Overland stage. Indian fighters attacked that station in July 1863, destroying the facilities and killing a stage company employee and four soldiers who had been patrolling the road. A stone monument commemorates this site, also known as Burnt Station. After that attack, the stage company rebuilt at the head (southeast end) of the canyon, this time including a circular stone fortification with gun ports for defense. Today this later site, also called Round

Station, includes the stabilized ruins of the defensive structure and the coral; the station itself is gone. An interpretive wayside exhibit tells the story.

Directions: At odometer mile 37.0, turn left onto an entrance road to the historic Round Station site. After your visit, continue through the canyon. At odometer mile 40.7 look across the ravine to the west to see the stone monument that commemorates Canyon/Burnt Station and the men who died there. No station remains are visible.

Continue westbound through the canyon. At odometer reading 41.7 miles, the road forks: bear left, staying on the main road. At odometer mile 43.1 is a triangle intersection. Bear left, following the directional sign for the Pony Express Trail. At mile 45.1, observe the two-track road on the flat to the left: it is probably the original Central Overland road.

At odometer reading 49.3 miles, the dirt road intersects a paved road and the Pony Express Back Country Byway ends. Here visitors have a choice:

For a down-and-back side-trip into Ibapah, *turn left. On the right at odometer mile 52.3 is a turnout with historical information about the Goshute Indians, early settlers of Ibapah, Deep Creek Pony Express Station, and the Lincoln Highway. Ahead at Ibapah, a community trading post sells snack foods, but no other services are available.*

Exhibits near the site of the Deep Creek station.

To view a monument commemorating Howard Egan's Deep Creek Station, continue through Ibapah. At the south edge of the community where the paved road angles to the southwest, continue straight (south) onto a gravel road. The gravel road jogs right, left, and right. The monument is on private land on the left side of the road at about odometer reading 53.0. Please do not trespass. After

your visit, turn north and retrace your drive along the paved road and continue 30 miles to U.S.-93A. Consult further directions below.

OR,

To continue directly to Nevada, *turn north (right) and drive 30 miles to U.S.-93A. Turn left (south) to continue the auto tour along the Pony Express National Historic Trail to Ely, Nev.; or turn right (north) to West Wendover, Nev. Services are available in both towns. At West Wendover, enter westbound I-80 to continue the auto tour for the California National Historic Trail. Consult the Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide Across Nevada for further directions to the Pony Express and California National Historic Trails.*

This ends the Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide for Utah.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

National Park Service
National Trails System Office
324 South State Street
Suite 200
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Email:
ntsl_interpretation@nps.gov

Mormon Pioneer NHT
www.nps.gov/mopi

California NHT
www.nps.gov/cali

Pony Express NHT
www.nps.gov/poex

Utah Tourism
www.utah.gov/visiting/travel.html

National Pony Express Association (NPEA)
www.xphomestation.com

Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA)
www.octa-trails.org

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National Historic Trails

Utah
Auto Tour Route Map

Northern Shoshone
Idaho
Nevada
Idaho
Utah
Wyoming
Idaho
Bear Lake
Salt Lake Cutoff
Golden Spike National Historic Site
Brigham City
Salt Lake Cutoff
Box Elder
Cache
Rich
Weber
Great Salt Lake
Ogden
Western Shoshone
Morgan
Devil's Slide
Castle Rock
Emory
Echo
Hastings Cutoff
Salt Lake City
Summit
Weber River
Wendover
Nevada
Utah
Great Salt Lake Desert
Grantsville
Stansbury Park
Salt Lake
Wasatch
Iosepa
Tooele
Bluffdale
Lehi
Cedar Fort
Orem
Provo
Ute
Goshute Shoshone
Gold Hill
Dugway
Faust
Fairfield
Utah Lake
Tooele
Ibapah
Callao
Fish Springs
Utah
Juab
Colorado

Auto Tour Route
Interpretive Features:
A1 Segment A
B1 Segment B
C1 Segment C
D1 Segment D
California Trail
Mormon Pioneer Trail
Pony Express Trail
Bidwell-Bartleson Trail
Interstate Highway
U.S. Highway
Utah State road

National Trails System
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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